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JONATHAN SWIFT.

VOL. III.



JONATHAN SWIFT

A NOVEL

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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JONATHAN SWIFT.

CHAPTER I.

St. John left for London that same afternoon, but, before he went, he did his duty like a true friend, and, in consequence, Jonathan Swift was soon summoned to the room where Sir William Temple lay dying.

'Are you better, Sir William?' began Jonathan; but the baronet waved his thin, worn hand impatiently.

'No, I am dying,' he said, 'dying fast. My life is a question of days at most, perhaps of hours.' He paused wearily. 'See how weak I am,' he resumed. 'I must

VOL. III.

husband the little breath God has left me, or I shall not be able to let you know. Why,' he went on, raising himself in bed, and speaking with a suppressed excitement that seemed to lend him fresh strength, 'why do you wish to know? Is not my character of the highest? Have I not always been a Puritan among men of fashion, a comparative saint in courts? How dare you suspect me?'

'Suspect you?'

Sir William waved his hand again.

'Remember my situation,' he said. 'Do not trifle with me, or it may soon be too late. St. John has told me all, sir; you love my daughter!'

Jonathan strode up close to the bed.

'What?' he whispered.

'You had no right to suspect her,' said the dying statesman. 'Poor little innocent, God bless her! Sir, are you not ashamed of yourself?' A long breath was the only answer.

'Listen,' went on Sir William. 'You ask why I did not acknowledge her before, but think what I had to face. I had always revelled in the character that would have lost me; I had reprobated in the strongest way the excesses of the age. Could I dub myself a sham and a humbug? Yes, I ought, I know I ought to have done so rather than run this terrible risk of letting a vile, contemptible world point out and mutter at my poor wronged pet. You see, it was pride all through. I loved her mother years ago, but she was beneath me, forsooth, and I was too proud to marry her. Thank God, when dying, her mother told Hestor all, or I believe it was in me to save my character even from suspicion, by letting the poor child face the world alone. Yes, my own character, but not hers. I never thought she would be doubted. She! so pure, so good, so like an

angel. Sir, are not you ashamed of yourself?'

Jonathan bowed his head solemnly.

'Do they all doubt, all of them, all of you?' asked the baronet, with supreme scorn.

'You judge me hardly,' said Jonathan, 'and it is just you should. But how much have I had to——' He checked himself. 'Poor Lauriel! Yes, I despise myself too, utterly.'

Sir William was lying down again now. The effort had been too much for his failing strength.

'Then Stella, Hestor knows? Has known all along?' asked Jonathan, in a low, agitated voice, which indicated the depth of his emotion.

Sir William made a gesture of assent.

"'And she has guarded your character at the risk of her own?' went on Jonathan.

The dying statesman opened his eyes,

and with, an effort, raised himself upon his elbow.

'No more,' he said. 'I have told you my secret. I am in your hands. You can repay my treatment of you in the time that is past by gibbeting me as a hypocrite, a petty, contemptible hypocrite, who wished to be thought better than other people, and who was not. Perhaps I have deserved this at your hands. So be it. I will not humble myself by asking for consideration. The fault and the folly have been mine. May Heaven forgive me. If I had acknowledged Hestor, and saved her from the buttery, had allowed her to mix with my friends, how different all this might have been! She might have married a prince, yet now she will marry you, you who have dared to doubt her. And all uselessly. All sacrificed in vain-branded to all posterity as a sly old libertine. Leave me, sir.'

'You wrong me deeply,' answered Jonathan. 'Your secret is safe, perfectly safe. One word before I go. Why did you tell me this?'

'Because,' replied Sir William, 'I know—never mind how I know—that Hestor loves you'—he paused wearily for breath before continuing—'and to-day I learnt what it was that kept you apart. Don't be less kind to her for my sake. Leave me, I must rest.'

Jonathan turned to leave the room, but Sir William called him back.

'Mr. Swift,' he said, 'Hestor, under my present will, will get a thousand pounds at my death. Come back to me presently. This must be altered; deception is useless now.'

And then the short interview was over. It was the last Jonathan Swift ever had with Sir William Temple.

Jonathan left the room scarcely realizing

his happiness. The transition from the state of abject misery in which he had been some few hours before was so abrupt that at first he could hardly understand his feelings. It had all come upon him without a word of warning. 'Mr. Swift, you love my daughter.' But so it always is. People do not call 'fire' with a preface; and so, as a rule, what is most important, has least introduction.

This interview of five minutes' duration, these half-dozen sentences were to exercise a potent influence on the future life of our hero—were, in fact, to diametrically alter it. He felt it was so, and to such an extent that he left the chamber of death like one walking in his sleep and dreaming a joyful dream. The one clear idea that possessed him was that now Stella might be his. He could formally ask her now, at once. His heart beat tumultuously. This was the first happiness he had tasted for so long, poor

fellow, the first gleam of sunlight that had shone for so many years on his weary journeying, that can you wonder at the ecstasy with which he welcomed it? He must calm himself before he goes to clasp his beloved, hear her say those delicious words his soul is longing for, and he pauses irresolutely when the avenue is reached.

Presently he decides, and alters his walk towards the cone hill. It is further that way, and the climb will do him good. His nerves will be the steadier for it. And so, with a ring in his walk that had not been there since Lauriel missed it that terrible night long ago, and a light in his eyes that Moor Park had never seen there before, he goes back to new life, back to human sympathy and love and trust. How joyfully, too, he remembers that his position is now sufficiently assured to justify his taking his darling to himself without the dread of condemning her to poverty. His book was

selling, his reputation was growing, preferment was promised him. And the sunshine seems all the brighter to him because of the terrible cloud that has just rolled away. Alas, poor Jonathan!

And meanwhile, little thinking who was rapidly approaching, Stella stood in her wretchedness on the old familiar spot on the top of the cone hill. She had gone there, not to weep—the tears would not come yet—but because the house seemed to stifle her, and, once outside, her scarcely conscious steps had instinctively carried her to the spot memory made so dear. And now, standing there by the old fir-tree where Jonathan had written her those first verses that hinted at his love, she is thinking in quiet agony that only death can ever unite them now. Mad! mad!!!

There is a quick step behind her, and the next moment Jonathan is in her presence in all the glory of his happiness. She sees what is coming, she knows it, she feels it, and, clasping her hands in anguish, she exclaims,

'Go away—please go away—I want to be alone!'

'Nay, Stella darling, you will let me stay, will you not? I have come to ask you to let me stay with you always. Will you be my little wife, sweetest? I am unworthy of you, Stella, I know it, but yet I am presumptuous enough to think you love me just a little. Do you not?'

'Go away!' she moans in answer—'don't ask me, please don't ask me. Let me alone to die.'

'What is the matter, dearest?' he said, tenderly taking her unresisting hand in his. 'Is it so hard to tell me that you love me?'

'Have pity upon me,' she moans—'I cannot.'

'Then let me assume it, darling. I know

you love me, for I know your secret. It is our secret now.'

The reference helps her to regain enough composure to face the worst.

'I can never marry you, Jonathan, and I can never tell you why. Try to forgive me; it is not my fault. Some day, in a better world, you will know all about it.'

He turns quite cold.

'Then you have been trifling with me—you, too, are faithless!'

'Jonathan! Jonathan! can't you trust me?'

But he turns away, and light, love, human sympathy, and sweet, strong trust have quitted his soul never to return to it again in this world as he says, 'Good-bye.'

CHAPTER II.

TWENTY-FOUR hours later, Sir William Temple left this world for one less diplomatic and a great deal better. The shock of his last interview with his secretary had been more than the worn frame could bear, and the end had been its consequence. He died very much regretted, very much respected, very much admired. The king felt he had lost a thoroughly trustworthy, steady-going counsellor who might be relied on in matters of fact with undeviating, unhesitating certainty. And, beyond matter of fact, King William was not in the habit of asking many questions; for, though far from being

a genius, he was a giant in the political world compared with any living Englishman of prominence. And he knew it, as a man always does under the circumstances. So he plaintively mourned over the head clerk, and smiled grimly over the eulogies that were written about the statesman.

Stella's grief was of a different order. She loved her father deeply. In her unselfish soul, the thought of how much this father should have done for her which he had not done, and how slight, after all, were the benefits he had conferred on her compared with what, in the sacred name of daughter, she had a right to ask, never intruded itself.

'He was very good to me,' she pondered sadly, 'very, very good; and now there is no one left, no one to love me, and there never can be—not until I go too.'

Stella did not cry about it, however. The blow had fallen when she was too

numbed for crying. The memory of that awful scene which had taken her lover from her had left an all too vivid consciousness that there were calamities far worse than death, and separations far more bitter than the grave. Mrs. Dingley was a little disgusted at Stella's apparent apathy. Of the relationship between the late baronet and his daughter she knew nothing, whatever she may have suspected; but to her mind it was only common nature to weep bitterly when a generous benefactor was taken away, more especially when he happened to be an individual of wealth and position. I agree with the sentiment; but, as a matter of 'common nature,' it is only accurate as to the last clause.

So at the first meal at which they met, after the news of the sad event was brought to them, Mrs. Dingley, in tears and somewhat aggrieved, opened the flood-

gates of her gentle displeasure on poor Stella.

'My dear, why don't you cry? People will think you don't care; and Sir William, poor dear Sir William, was always so kind to you.'

'Yes, he was very kind,' answered Stella, simply.

'Well, then, my dear, why don't—' began Mrs. Dingley; but then her eyes met Stella's, and she checked herself abruptly. 'Gracious heavens, my child! you mustn't look like that. People won't expect you to be so miserable as that.'

'I am so tired,' was the weary answer, 'so tired and lonely.'

Mrs. Dingley had forgotten all about Sir William now. She moved her chair close to Stella's, and gently drew the dark head to her breast.

'I love you very dearly, darling; don't be lonely.'

Then there was a long silence, and Stella lay still like a weary child.

- 'Hestor,' presently began Mrs. Dingley.
- 'Call me Stella, please—always Stella.'

'Is it wise, my darling, to think so much of that? He is not worthy of you, or he would love you better, and he has treated you very badly, and he has made your little heart ache, and I don't think I will ever speak to him again,' ran on Mrs. Dingley, with rapid feminine aggressiveness.

The weary head forsook its resting-place, and the weary voice cried out, as though in pain,

'Oh! no, he is good and true; I love him, God knows how I love him. But I never can marry him—never, never, never. So I told him no. It isn't his fault. I told him no.'

'Stella! Why?' ejaculated Mrs. Dingley, in amazement.

But Stella sadly shook her head.

'I cannot tell you, not even you. You will trust me—won't you trust me? You are the only one left who will.'

'Yes, my dear, I suppose it is all for the best, and I am sure, whosever fault it is, it is not yours. Now come and lie down. We won't talk about it any more.'

And she took her to the couch and covered her over warmly, as a mother would a child, and then she sang to her softly, sweetly a song of His kingdom who giveth His beloved sleep, until at last the heavy eyes were closed, the weary-looking features softened to a smile, and Stella was dreaming she was happy.

It is a sad contrast to look just now at Jonathan. He too has been trying to snatch a few moments of restful oblivion, but his racked and agitated mind refuses him the boon, so he has risen from his couch and is writing, with that strange look upon his face of a man whose possibilities

are infinite for good or evil, the all too suggestive inspiration of the moment.

'Now I will sleep. I thank thee, God, for sleep! The deepening shade proclaims the seasons too Have spirits, and that disembodied Time Floats through Eternity. Yes, day is done, The first dull, awful day of misery Done! Over! Past! And I will strive to think There's no to-morrow. Come, Oblivion, come, And let me for a little while have rest Unconscious, like the clay I left on earth. Why gib'st thou, Torture, on thy steely throne? Why sitt'st thou open-eyed! Lo! it is night! Stay—say not—it has come, unspoken come. My God! my God! then Hell indeed is Hell.'

He smiled when the verses were written. They were powerful verses, he knew, and the consciousness of his strength pleased him. Alas! poor Jonathan, has it come to this that you can smile over such an awful thought simply because you thought it? Is your ambition turning to self-love? Alas! poor Jonathan. There were two possible results of such an experience as Jonathan Swift had undergone in the case

of such a man as was he, that is to say, a man who was merely human. The Apostle John, Bernard, Baxter, or Thomas Boston are in a different category, and are governed by different laws. The source of their power both for themselves and others is direct inspiration from that Being in whom Positivists will not believe because He is not more manifest to their senses than is the Principle of Life. And of course I must except the opposite and somewhat larger class of those who are less than human. There is many a German Jew (and there are many more who ought to have been German Jews) who would not be nearly so much affected by the loss of his belief in Human Nature, and the shattering of such idols as were those of Jonathan Swift, as he would be by a fluctuation in the money-market. then that is because he is a German Jew, or because he ought to have been one. So I repeat that with such a man as our hero

there were only two possible results of his experience, self-effacement or self-indulgence; and they are both really modifications of the same thing. For to succumb to trials, and cease henceforth to do more than pursue the routine necessary to existence, is the self-indulgence of those feminine, unhappy minds which have never owned the invigorating sway of a supreme passion.

On the other hand, self-indulgence with a very great number means sensuality, because the natural bent of a very great many is sensual; but all this is simply a question of original, innate, mental tendency. What I mean to impress on you, gentle reader, as in my view the key of all Jonathan Swift's future history, is merely this—and, so stated, it will appear almost a truism—Jonathan had a certain absorbing passion, and this by the happy influences of a heart, feeling, generous and unsuspecting, and an education which taught that Man was made in God's

own image, and that his chief end was the glory of his Maker, by these happy influences, I say, this passion was moulded and applied for the service of the world. Ambition was the passion, and the object, supplied by the influence, meditation, and impulse of his earlier years, was the grand one of the good of his fellow-men. As to all this, however, he had reverted to a state of nature. How wicked, poor, petty, and altogether despicable had the very best of these fellow-creatures turned out to be. Ambitious to serve such paltry, pernicious insects! It was impossible. And so, with his faith staggered, and the golden chains which bound him to Humanity snapped and broken, he turned in upon himself, lived for himself, and he who had once indulged the glorious ambition of being great for the sake of all mankind, was slave henceforward of the selfish wish to be great for the sake of one.

Stella's refusal of him gave an immediate impulse to Jonathan's unhappily emancipated ambition. Beyond the feeling that this girl, whom he had believed to be an angel incarnate, should deliberately set to work to ruin his life and break his heart, there was a suspicion in his mind that Stella was contemptible as well as wicked, and had refused him because of his poverty and want of position. 'Let her see some day what she has missed,' whispered a voice in his breast. It was much too pretty a sentiment for Jonathan Swift to deliberately entertain, but it was enough as a matter of impulse to initiate his new career.

The recent success of his book gave him an opportunity for grasping at fame such as he had never before enjoyed. It was the first step up that ladder on which the first step is the most difficult. There would be no necessity now to hunt over London for a publisher who could understand original genius. They knew his name, and that was better than any amount of genius to an author then as now. It was necessary that he should wait at Moor Park until Sir William's will had been read, and various matters of detail arranged, and, while pondering the delay involved, it suddenly flashed across him that he had never fulfilled Sir William's last request. The lawyer had not been sent to the dying man, and Hestor Johnson would receive, under the will, only a pittance which would scarcely enable her to live.

'Fifty pounds a year!' he thought. 'Ah, I am sorry for that. It is not much to live upon, and the money will probably go where it is less wanted.'

He was right. That was all Hestor Johnson received under her father's will; and, to her unspeakable joy, there was no acknowledgment of her paternity. So her father's memory was safe from libertine

sneers at his pretentious purity. Mrs. Dingley was satisfied with the baronet's generosity. 'It is a fairly large sum to bestow, "In consideration of a steward's faithful services," after all,' she thought. Besides, there was a clause prohibiting the rents on the Moor Park estate being raised within a term of years, and therefore the nice little house and garden was theirs at a nominal rent for some time to come.

'We shall be very comfortable, Stella,' she said. 'We must try to be happy too.'

Under this same will, Jonathan Swift was appointed Sir William Temple's literary executor. The position took him aback a little. The task was one that required time to efficiently discharge, even if his heart were in the work, and this his heart certainly was not. Then again, edit the remains how he would, they would assuredly not sell. They were not popular, by any manner of means, and no rearranging could

make them so. The profit of his prospective labour in fame and money was therefore exceedingly remote; but, on the other hand, Jonathan did not see any way out of the difficulty, except by a curt refusal, which would be construed by everybody, from the king downwards, as a slight to Sir William's memory, and resented accordingly. So Jonathan made up his mind that the waste of six months or so was better than the still more thankless task of kicking against the pricks—as yet—and decided to remain for the present where he was.

CHAPTER III.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE'S posthumous works required a terrible amount of judicious editing, and Jonathan so found, to the weariness of his spirit. Such a mass of intelligent common-place, and little or nothing of anything better or worse, afforded no facilities for the selection of the fittest. So pruning would not do. Improving was out of the question. Mediocrity is of the nature of an element, unalterable. Interpolation? No, that would not be honest, if unavowed, and would appear presumptuous if acknowledged.

Thinking thus after three months of hard

labour to make Sir William's 'remains' satisfy the literary test of a work he always insisted on, namely, that he, Jonathan, should enjoy it, and just as he was beginning to despair, the saving notion of a comprehensive scheme of foot-notes flashed across him. Pages of grimly facetious explanation should tip and feather the blunt devious arrows of Sir William's paragraphs. Why not? Foot-notes had always been recognised as a justifiable auxiliary for obscuring an author's sense, then what must they not be when they disguise his nonsense, or, better still, clothe his platitudes? So to work he set at once, delighted with his inspiration. Page after page was rapidly written and fitted to the text with an unfailing ingenuity which the comprehensive, Gladstonian history-of-the-world style of his author aided not a little. Still, work as he would, the affair was a long one, and it was three months before he was able to

 pack his box—there was very little in it but books and papers—and bid good-bye to the desolation, grown doubly-desolate, of Moor Park.

So at last, once again Jonathan Swift was in London.

'God made the country, but man made the town, God made the bullock, but man made the beef.'

For my own part, I prefer beef. I believe that, too, was historically the case with Cowper, especially if the bullock was a bull. However, Jonathan, from motives of economy, located himself at the 'Swan Tavern' in an alley off Cornhill, and at once set about the sale of his manuscript. It had not occurred to him that a year was a very long time for the author of a successful pamphlet to hide his light under a bushel, but this fact was vividly called before his mind at the first bookseller's shop he entered.

'Is Mr. Lintot at home?' he asked the lad serving.

- 'Yes.'
- 'Then oblige me by taking my name up to him—Mr. Swift—Jonathan Swift.'
 - 'Does he know you?' inquired the lad.
 - 'Know me? Of course.'

So away went the lad. Presently he returned to say that his master was very busy, and would Mr. Swift say on what special business he wished to see him.

'Good morning,' remarked Jonathan, walking out.

The episode amused him somewhat. He felt in a position to be amused. To his amazement, however, the next publisher he called upon, and the next, and the next again were all equally busy and desirous of knowing his business through the medium of some office-boy or head bottle-washer. It was growing seriously like the old times Jonathan had fondly hoped had gone for ever. At last he went back to his inn thoroughly disgusted. What did it mean? He had

letters from nearly all these men in his pocket, only a year old, and yet when he acts upon their own 'earnest solicitation,' and affords them the 'wished-for opportunity' of publishing his next work, this is how they accept it. He sat down, however, undaunted as yet, and wrote to the only publisher of position on whom he had not yet called, requesting him to come next day to confer with him about the publication of Sir William Temple's posthumous works, and mentioning that he was the author of 'The Battle of the Books,' and Sir William's literary executor.

'There,' he thought. 'If the fellow chooses to stay away he can. At any rate, he can hardly send the office-boy.'

Punctually at eleven the publisher came. Sir William's name had been the talisman.

'Ah, there is a large volume in this manuscript alone,' he remarked, when Jonathan handed him the papers, whereupon our

hero explained that, as the documents in their bald state were somewhat dry for popular tastes, he had enlivened them with copious notes. Mr. Crawley stroked his chin; he was a shrewd man of the world.

'By the way,' he said, 'I am flattered by your application to me. So many of my friends in the trade are better known than myself.'

'The works have as yet been offered to none,' answered Jonathan. 'Chances like this are not discussed with boys in the shop and general servants.'

Mr. Crawley understood the position at a glance.

'I shall willingly undertake the publication of these documents, Mr. Swift; but the fairest way to all concerned—in fact, my universal practice—is to buy the copyright. Will you sell me these works for a sum down? For instance, let me see.—The

simplest form of contract is a receipt,' and, taking up a pen, he wrote, 'Received from James Crawley, publisher, the sum of ——'—'we will talk about price in a moment'—'in full payment for certain posthumous works of Sir William Temple, Bart., enumerated below.'

'I suppose my guarantee for the creditable form of the issue is your own self-interest?' inquired Jonathan.

'Certainly,' answered Mr. Crawley, 'and, as I hate haggling, I will tell you at once the outside figure I can give. Will you take one hundred guineas for the lot?'

Jonathan made a mental calculation of what his first work had produced, and answered, 'Yes,' whereupon Mr. Crawley very much regretted having offered so much. However, he wrote an order for the money, payable in three days, took the manuscript and his signed receipt, and went his way.

In a few days flaming notices appeared of the approaching publication of the latest works of that great statesman and learned man, Sir William Temple, but there was no word in them of the editor's notes. And when the works were actually published there were no notes. Mr. Crawley was wise in his generation. The great statesman's name was ample to sell an edition, pay expenses, and leave a handsome profit; then why should the gauntlet be run of printing double the matter and incurring double the risk for a very problematical advantage? He did not see much wit in Jonathan's footnotes, so probably other people would not see it either. As for Jonathan, he merely smiled a lurid smile that would have made Mr. Crawley very uncomfortable had he seen it, and muttered to himself, 'What incredible idiots these people will appear to Prince Posterity!' He was right.

All this time Jonathan had deferred VOL. III.

going to push his fortunes at Court in the hope of being efficiently aided in doing so by the additional reputation his 'notes' would confer on him. Now, of course, he waited no longer. The king, who had been gracious to him when he was absolutely unknown, presumably would be so still; and he had in his pocket a letter from Sir William, begging in his favour his majesty's gracious countenance and protection. This Jonathan forwarded through the proper channel to the king, accompanying it with a humble apology for not having sooner availed himself of it on the ground of the duty he owed to his late patron's literary memory, and further begging his majesty to confer on him (as he once had promised, but probably had forgotten) the first vacant prebend of Canterbury. The reply was a command to attend at Court, and to Court Jonathan accordingly went. His reception was good. The king had let fall a few kindly words about him which set society at its wit's end to remember who he was and what he had done.

'Ah, yes—wrote, didn't he? Clever, was it not? I believe I read it. Yes, I remember now; of course it was brilliant. Henry St. John told me so. But my rascally bookseller never sent home my copy, though I actually prepaid it to make sure, and somehow or other I never troubled to hunt him up. After all, it hardly matters. It is only for a day or two that people talk about a book.'

By the aid of which and similar communications the great little world was prepared to accord Jonathan a sufficiently cordial welcome when he appeared on its stage. His personal appearance, however, was very much against him. He was beyond Tailoric aid. Baines himself could do nothing for him. The angles would show, let his professional advisers pad never so wisely.

And his face fitted his body. The stern, gaunt features were sterner, gaunter than ever, and were beginning to ape the spirit inside and look harsh as well. However, at the first reception the king singled him out for a nod, a faint alteration of feature that passed with the soldier prince for a smile, a brief military remark about Sir William having done his duty, and, 'You must not be forgotten now he is gone. But I am sorry you did not take the commission.' That was all; but the courtiers, accustomed to their master's taciturnity, looked upon it as a good deal. So the little wits left Jonathan's clothes, and figure, and face alone in the meantime. Some of them even tried to be positively civil and appreciative. 'Lud! a fine day, Mr. Swift. Ha, ha! As to weather, have you heard Lord Sparkish's last? He hates talking about the weather, and somebody said to him it was fine. Then, barring the

interval between twelve o'clock last night and no time this morning, answers Sparkish, "You are foresworn; for yesterday you told me, by Lud, it was wet."'

And to such well-meant, if not invigorating civilities, Jonathan responded warmly, for among these people he was entirely out of his element, and even the most idiotic diversion was a preferable evil to standing about alone with nothing to do but to think, as such a man circumstanced as he was must think in such company.

Jonathan Swift was probably the superior of every man in that assemblage in every respect worth mentioning but one, and that a very important one—namely, manner. He had never mixed in that class of society before, and he frankly acknowledged to himself that this had been a real loss to him. The exquisitely worked automata around him were his superiors in colour and shading. I wish people would not use

the word 'polish' in this connection. Polish is acquired by rubbing something off. But, add negations to the genus homo as long as you will, and you will not get a Beau Brummel. No; for that you must resort to your oil-paints and varnishes. And a very satisfactory substitute for 'polish' it is that they supply one with. However, Jonathan gradually became accustomed to his surroundings, and felt more at home. Two or three youngish men, who liked a joke and who had sense enough to see that Jonathan was a real wit, used sometimes to ask him to drink a bottle of wine with them, and some of the better sort began to really appreciate him as a sterling man of talent. So things began to go comfortably enough, except that nothing seemed to come of it Poor Jonathan felt bitterly that, all. whether snubbed or not snubbed, it was intensely degrading for him to dance attend-

ance on princes and potentates in the hopes of begging a living; and when weeks and months passed, and this degradation seemed to have been vainly undergone, he was galled to the soul. He had written nothing lately, he had no heart to do so, and his finances were running low. But there was not much longer to wait. The end of this scene was fast approaching. It came thus: Henry St. John, who was enjoying himself in France, heard of Jonathan's appearance in the London world, and he wrote to Lord Berkeley (who was an old friend of his father's), saying that any good turn the peer could do Mr. Swift would be looked upon as a personal favour. Lord Berkeley accordingly introduced himself to Jonathan, and was soon very much struck with his parts and evident capacity. So much was this the case that, after having inquired in the kindest possible manner as to the

prospects and ambitions of the gawky genius, he offered Jonathan the post of private secretary to himself in his capacity of one of the Lord Justices of Ireland, pointing out that there would not be much work to do, and consequently plenty of leisure for literary pursuits.

Jonathan paused a moment to cast an eye of loathing over the past months of unsuccessful mendicancy, and then accepted the offer. They were talking in an anteroom when this occurred, and the words had hardly passed Jonathan's lips, when our old friend, Lord Vane of Vane Castle, sauntered in. Lord Berkeley shook hands with him, and, after some conversation had passed between them, said,

'I must introduce Mr. Swift to you. He is going as my secretary to Ireland. Come, you will be able to talk to him better than I can—hugely clever—Mr. Jonathan Swift.—Lord Vane.'

Lord Vane started.

- 'Did you reside some time at Merton,' he asked, abruptly.
 - 'I did, my lord,' answered Jonathan.
- 'And were you for some time Sir William Temple's private secretary?'
 - 'I was.'
- 'Ah,' remarked Lord Vane, in a tone of stage dissimulation, 'I think I have heard of you before. I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again. Just now I am busy. Good-bye, for the present.'
- 'You of all people,' laughed Lord Berkeley, when his friend had disappeared, 'must excuse him such little eccentricities. He is a philosopher.'

Jonathan did not understand the philosophy, nor did he care to; and presently he took his leave and returned to the 'Swan,' tolerably satisfied with having obtained a post which would give him leisure to exert his special talents, and exceedingly pleased

at escaping from the miserable servitude of a 'hanger-on.'

Lord Vane had not forgotten De Guiscard's story. This was the Swift then who abused his opportunities, as Sir William Temple's secretary, to furnish political conspirators with information. No doubt the same scheme was to be pursued under these new auspices. Ireland, too, was a better field to work in. The matter was clear, and the king must be informed immmediately.

Is the reader surprised at such conduct on the part of Lord Vane of Vane Castle. Certainly it betrays opinions diametrically opposed to those he entertained when last we met him, but that is of course. He was a theoretical politician. He repudiated experience, and worked on 'General Principles.' And be it remarked that 'General Principles,' in politics, mean simply the premisses requisite to produce a desired conclusion. The Irish Land Act of 1870 was an Act founded on 'General Principles,' and so was the diametrically opposite (in all but the general principle of robbery) Irish Land Act of ten years later. Yet both were introduced and carried by the same individuals. Certainly Lord Vane would have made an enthusiastic Gladstonian. This by the way.

The result was the same to Jonathan, whether the motives which inspired this conduct were rational or the reverse. Lord Vane told his majesty a long story, very much edited, so to speak, and much more plausible that that De Guiscard had told him. It was a tissue of falsehoods, partly original and partly the reverse. But the credulous peer believed the tale he had been told, and felt it his duty to make the king believe it too. And he did.

Some days later Jonathan went to Court with Lord Berkeley, and felt at once that

the atmosphere had changed. The dead weight of society was against him. acquaintances shunned him. The countenance of my Lord Sansens, the Honourable Mr. Job Lotte, and their fellows was withdrawn from Jonathan Swift! What a strange being man is! Fancy a guinea pig slighting an elephant! However, most of these people were polite in their insolence. You see, they had lots of practice. But the hangers-on were different. There were a good many commission-agents then as now, at Court and about it, who introduced the Justcomes and Specflies (for a consideration) to their new sphere, and painted occasionally the portrait of a statesman in return for giving political information they had overheard at keyholes.

'No, I thank you,' said Mr. Augustus Mulmey, when Jonathan offered him some trifling service that the moment had brought forth, and then Jonathan noticed that Mr.

Augustus Mulmey was looking down upon him with a most Mulmeian sneer.

Just then Lord Vane happened to pass, and vouchsafed no recognition. The farce was over. Jonathan saw it all. And, turning on his heel, he went his way, taking with him the memory of one more series of insults, one more demonstration of the smallness, meanness, contemptibility of mankind.

CHAPTER IV.

The sequel to all this was not long delayed. The same evening a servant brought Jonathan a letter from Lord Berkeley, which ran in the following terms:—

'MY DEAR SIR,

'The king has been informed of some circumstances in your career to which he takes the strongest exception. What these circumstances are I have not been able to learn. Unfortunately, the result is the same. I am absolutely forbidden to avail myself of your services, and am regretfully obliged to cancel your

appointment as my secretary. The utmost I can do to mitigate the severity of His Majesty's commands is the gift of an Irish living. Two such are at my disposal just now—namely, Laracor and Rathbeggin. They together amount only to about half the value of the secretaryship. Such as they are, however, they are yours. Pray let me know without delay whether you care to accept this offer.'

That was all, except a great many expressions of impotent civility. Jonathan told the servant to wait a moment, and answered the letter then and there.

'I accept,' he said, curtly, 'your lord-ship's proposal as being the very best compensation you could offer me, under the circumstances, for my unjust dismissal. What the king can have heard of me, beyond what is patent to all the world, I am at a loss to conceive. However, it is satisfactory for me to consider that,

while judged unworthy to serve my king even indirectly, there is no hesitation about my fitness for serving my God.'

Two months more, and Jonathan was back again in Ireland, going through the old routine of Kilroot duties, and wondering at times if the events of the past year had only been an ugly dream. And yet, similar though his present position was to the one he had occupied only a year before, to Jonathan Swift it seemed like an altogether new experience. Events were moving fast with him, and he was changing fast with events. The cocoon which is a grave to the worm is a birthplace to the butterfly. Somewhat the same thought occurred to himself one day, and will illustrate my meaning. Jonathan was restlessly pacing the floor of his study, and chafing against the fate which held him back with an iron hand from bearing the part Nature had intended for talents such as his.

'What can one do here?' he muttered, angrily. 'What can I do here for myself?' I used to wonder what I could do for my parish, my cocoon. That is over now. I know it is senseless, insensible; but what can I do in my cocoon for myself?'

Just then the bell rang, and his servant ushered in a clamorous peasant whose wife lay dying of a virulent fever. Jonathan listened patiently, tenderly, to the heart-broken wailing of the poor fellow, and then went to the pestilent bedside to minister as well as in him lay the last consolation of religion. The afternoon was gone before he returned.

'Another day wasted,' he thought. True, a passing soul had had its burden lightened; true, a trembling spirit had seen the dark water of the dismal river glancing in the sunlight of everlasting hope; and God forgive him for looking at it so, he did not grudge his labour. It was his duty, part of

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VOL. III.

the work he was paid to perform, and to perform as best he could. But no longer was it a labour of love. He preached, he christened, he buried; all the requirements of his post were punctually fulfilled,the parishioners looked on him with pitying wonder, as an individual who worked much harder than he need,—but the sanctifying motive which would have made these labours a pool of Siloam to him, in which, wading, he would have received his sight, had gone for ever. The yearning after others' good was his no more—and, though he did his duty without a murmur, it was because to do so was his duty to himself. 'Another day wasted,' cried the restless, striving spirit. Ay! and, since you think it so, worse than wasted.

By degrees the servitude of his position became almost unbearable. Day after day passed by leaving Jonathan no better, no wiser; unchanged, in fact, save that there were left him so many opportunities the less. He felt it was so. There was no time for reading, save when he walked, and none for writing, except by trenching on his scanty hours of sleep. He felt that the position was hopeless. It would be as sane to hope for distinctions in a dark cellar as in these precious benefices of Laracor and Rathbeggin. And, when once this had fairly impressed itself on his mind, he decided to remain no longer. He would trust to his unaided genius, and, unbeneficed by a single penny, face the world in some arena which gave scope for his blows, rather than remain helpless, smothered, and well-fed, under the bushel of this routine, ecclesiastical hard labour.

Prior to resigning his benefice, Jonathan thought it wise to spend a short time in London, making what arrangements he could for ensuring victory in the severe struggle which lay before him. He was

thirty-four years of age. Defeat was becoming more and more serious. The conflict was waxing in every way more arduous. The only friend who had both the will and power to help him was St. John, and to St. John he was determined not to go, for fear his friend's political prospects might be interfered with should he defiantly patronize one lying, as was Jonathan, under the regal ban. So he must fight quite alone, as of old. More than that—by himself and for himself.

During the few days of his stay in London, Jonathan returned to his old quarters at the 'Swan Inn,' as they were fairly cheap and comfortable, and the landlord was civil. There was a further reason, however. The brother of the innkeeper was one of the attendants at Bedlam. He frequently came to the inn to while away a heavy evening, and his conversation, turning, as it almost invariably did, on the asylum and

Jonathan. Well, it so chanced that, the Saturday following our hero's arrival at the 'Swan,' this brother of the host had leave for the day, and came to spend his leisure at the family hostelry. He was delighted to hear that his reverend auditor of some time before had returned.

'One of the few gentlemen I ever came across who never seemed to tire of our cases,' he remarked, appreciatively, to a friend. 'I've made him forget dinner-time with some real bad ones! Ah, he knows when a tale is well told.'

As might have been expected, therefore, when Jonathan rang in the evening for his glass of port—which, by the way, was almost the only luxury he indulged in—'Number Seven' begged leave of the drawer to see what was wanted himself.

'How do you do, sir? I'm glad to see you back, sir. We've had lately, at the

house, some most peculiar and painful cases. Most peculiar and painful!' he repeated, with loving earnestness.

Jonathan shivered involuntarily. This man enjoyed madness as an old Whig enjoys '47 port. It was horrible. But the spell was broken.

'Sit down and tell me,' said Jonathan.

And the mental Ghoul, smiling placidly, did as he was bid. It was mid-night before Jonathan and 'Number Seven' parted.

'Then you will come with me to-morrow, sir? It is well worth seeing, I assure you.'

'Yes, I will come.'

Bedlam in the 'good old times' was free to the public on Sunday, upon payment of a small admission fee, and was used by the lower classes as a cheap bear-garden. To give a shivering, half-starved wretch a sound thwack with a cane upon the hand the broken intelligence could only instruct to outstretch for food, was glorious sport to that devilish thing, the mob. So Sunday after Sunday the riff-raff and their worse betters swarmed to the old monastery to disgrace their humanity by torturing their brethren who had been found out. I will not tell you more than I can help of what Jonathan saw that Sunday—I need not; for you will understand, reader, that no description of the horrors he saw would fully explain to you how they affected him.

A gibbering idiot in one corner of his cell was mouthing endlessly unmeaning supplications to space, leaving unnoticed the pricks of a sharp stick with which a knot of spectators were tormenting him. Jonathan turned away in horror. You would have done so too, reader, and yet the ghastly thought would not have been present to you, 'I have been mad—I may be mad again. This may be my fate. Oh, darkness unspeakable!' And another, sullen as a chained-up pestilence, sat in his straw

muttering blasphemies so terrible that even the ribald crew of pleasure-seekers shuddered to hear him, and left him unmolested in his den. That, too—it was too horrible to contemplate. Jonathan shivered visibly.

'Ah, I should have started you among the quieter ones,' remarked 'Number Seven,' noticing his pale face and agitated manner. 'Lord bless us, I felt queerish at first with this lot. This way, sir.'

'Do they know they are mad?' asked Jonathan, as they walked towards another part of the building.

'Not those ones,' answered his guide; but these do. They're as sane as you are, every now and then.'

'Then why are they kept always in this awful place?' asked Jonathan. 'The agony, the hideous agony of being here and not being mad! Great God! you do not subject your fellow-beings to that!'

'Yes, sir; you see, it can't be helped.

Who is going to pay for carting paupers backwards and forwards to the asylum? Once mad (for your poor devils) is pretty well always mad. We let 'em out sometimes, if they keep right for three years or so at a stretch. But people object to it. This mad lot is all dangerous, and poor as farthing ale. Because of their poverty they can't be looked after, and because of their viciousness they should be. So we e'en keep them locked up.'

'Father of mercies,' ejaculated Jonathan, 'how awful!'

Just then came a wail as of woe unspeakable from a dark grating, and a cold dew stood on Jonathan's face as he heard his name uttered with the mournful cadence of despair.

- 'Jonathan Swift, Jonathan Swift, I am lost—I am lost!'
- 'Hullo, does he know you, sir?' said Number Seven.

'Who is it?' asked Jonathan, in tones trembling with emotion.

A pale, emaciated face at the grating answered him.

- 'Save me, Swift—save me for the old times' sake in Dublin!'
- 'Percy O'Rourke! You—here!' was all the answer Jonathan's beating heart would let him make.
- 'Yes, here—here!' wailed back the once joyous boon companion of those old college days, remembered now with such terrible vividness. 'Yes, here—here! Trouble came upon me, I had no money, I was starved by inches; disease devoured me, my body wasted; then fever came, and my mind gave way. Oh, my God, why am I better now?'
- 'Are you well again—quite well?' said Jonathan, scarcely knowing what he said in the tumult of his soul.
 - 'Ah,' came the despairing answer, 'nei-

ther do you believe me. I am lost, lost, lost!' and, turning away, the miserable man seated himself on his couch of dirty straw, buried his head in his hands, and relapsed into the stupor of despair.

'I will save you, O'Rourke. I will be back soon,' cried Jonathan, and then he rushed from the building. His emotion was stifling him. 'How long?' he asked, abruptly, when he regained the mastery of his voice.

- 'Seven years,' answered the warder.
- 'And sane?'
- 'Pretty nearly all the time. He was very violent and dangerous just at first—nearly killed two keepers—so they think him safer here.'
- 'But if his friends would undertake the care of him?'
- 'Ah! then it would be different. It is the mad *poor* who come here, sir; the mad *poor*.'

Jonathan drew a long breath as one of those resolutions came upon him which alter natures and change the course of lives. He would never, God helping him, be one of the mad poor. Next day Percy O'Rourke was dead. Jonathan saw him decently buried, although the expense wrung his very soul; and then, all other considerations lost. swallowed up for ever, in the agony of desire to protect himself against the awful fate of his old college friend, he set off again for To suffer—never mind—to be Ireland. forgotten-never mind, but to save, stint, scrape where saving, stinting, scraping were at any rate possible—so that poverty might never surprise him, let madness do what it would, and he never be numbered with the mad-poor! He went back, travelling, as he once had travelled to save for others, on foot.

CHAPTER V.

A YEAR after Jonathan had definitely settled at Laracor, the monotony of his routine duties was abruptly broken in the following Stella, poor child, very soon discovered that she could not live without him. Had he been well in mind and body, successful, honoured, happy, she could have remained quietly resigned to the mysterious will of Providence, even although she should never have been fated to behold again the lover from whom she was so terribly severed even when nearest to his heart. But he was ill, unsuccessful, alone, neglected, and that she could not bear. Her love for him made it impossible.

'He asked me to be his wife,' she used to muse, 'and because that came between us why should I not live for him just the same? He needs me to brighten his lonely life, and take the bitterness out of his soul that the world has put there; and why should I not? People will be unkind, cruel, slanderous. But dare I not bear all that and much more for Jonathan's sake? And, besides, I am bound to,' she would often say to herself, 'for it is I who ruined his life and broke his heart like this. Surely the least I can do is to sacrifice myself a little for him now.'

She heard of him now and then through a channel which, with righteous duplicity, she had kept open. One of the gardeners at Moor Park had gone, when the establishment was broken up, into the service of an Irish landowner, whose seat was within a few miles of Jonathan's parsonage, and who attended Jonathan's ministrations when he

attended any. Before this man had gone, Stella had contrived to see him, and warn him solemnly against the wiles of the papacy.

'I shall send you a sermon about Romish errors now and then,' she said; 'but you must let me know when you receive them—they might be lost.'

Of course, in acknowledging these polemical effusions, James was sure to mention the old Moor Park secretary.

'Thank you for the last little book, miss,' he once wrote (and this letter was of a type with many another). 'But you need not be afraid of my turning Popish. Mr. Swift always notices when anyone is not in church, and finds out why. I hadn't been for a Sunday or two, and Mr. Swift lectured me roundly for it. So he did my master, who rarely goes at all. It isn't every parson would be game enough to lecture the master. Somehow, though, I don't think

Mr. Swift would mind much if anyone struck him dead. He looks just the same as plants do when the soil is what they can live in, but still it doesn't suit.'

And then would follow the tearful report how the everlasting rain ruined the roses. Stella knew very well what a depth of sad truth there was beneath all this. Even without such information, that the most casual observer could see at a glance how broken in spirit poor Jonathan was, she intuitively felt such must be the case. Love needs very little aid from logic and metaphysics. By love it had been given to her to understand this man, and therefore information as to what he seemed to feel, situated as he was, came only as confirmation of what she already knew. So the passionate longing to succour him and save him grew with the growing necessity. The more she felt 'he needs me,' the more she also felt that go she must, cost what it

Alas! poor child, or seraph would. rather, for truly wert thou of those of whom is the Kingdom of Heaven, little didst thou know how great that sacrifice was to be. Could even thine heroic selfforgetfulness have rushed to grapple with such a future had it been foreknown to thee? Away from him, kindly Time might have raised a mist between you, through which his present being should have seemed like a past memory, and even that the glamour of uncertainty should shroud. But to be close to him, and with those love-filled eyes to watch him sink, sink, in spite of thy tender arms stretched out to save him!—Down, still down, though thou fetterest him to Heaven with thy prayers. Lower, still lower, through the net of ineffectual pleadings into which thy very life is woven. Until at last the end comes, and the valley of the shadow of Death seems God's own brightness compared with the

outer darkness thou hast left behind! This at least she did know from the first, that for her own sake it would be infinitely better that she should not go. Come what might of good from her influence, to him, the association could only to her be one long pain. It was for his sake that she could not live without him: all for his sake.

So at length her mind was made up, and the struggle with herself was over. Then came the task, almost equally severe, of broaching the subject to Mrs. Dingley. It matters very little what one friend thinks of us when we have plenty more on whose good opinion that vital principle in all men and women worthy of the name—self-esteem, can feed; but it is a trying thing to be misunderstood, misjudged, doubted by one's only friend.

'What will she think of me? What can she think of me?' mournfully pondered Stella; but, let that be as it would, she was

resolved. So one afternoon, when the shades of approaching evening had begun to make reading difficult, Stella laid down the book she had been using as a gauge of the favouring darkness, and, turning to her companion, said, in as steady a voice as she could command,

'Mrs. Dingley, I want to talk to you about something very particular.'

She had intended, up to the moment of beginning the sentence, to say what she had to say without preliminary skirmishing, but it did seem so difficult when the time came.

'What is it, my dear?' asked Mrs. Dingley.

'It is very hard to tell you,' came the answer, 'you are the only friend I have got.'

'Now, my dear, I will not allow this sort of thing,' replied Mrs. Dingley. 'I'm worth a dozen ordinary friends, and why should you not be satisfied with me without wanting Heaven knows how many bad imitation ones, I don't know. You remind me of what Mr. St. John said once long ago. I had heard that somebody or other was very popular, very much beloved, and I asked him about it. "Well," he answered me, "—— hasn't many friends, but no one has a greater number of friendly enemies." Come now, is that the amicable condition you groan for?

It is scarcely necessary to remark that the worthy dame's righteous indignation was altogether artificial, and designed entirely to allow Stella to recover from her obvious agitation.

'That is just why you mustn't be angry with me, and----'

'Really,' interposed Mrs. Dingley, 'this is worse and worse. First I am the only friend you have got, and then you are afraid to trust my friendship to the same extent that you would that of the inconstant wind

or the ever-changing moonlight; you won't even tell me a secret!'

'But it wouldn't matter what they thought of me,' said Stella, sadly. 'I am afraid you will despise me now. Yet I must bear even that. I must do what I mean to do.'

'What? Why?' asked Mrs. Dingley, in gradually growing amazement, which she was powerless to disguise.

Stella dashed at it.

'I am going to Ireland to live near Jonathan and watch over him, and take care of him. He is poor, lonely, miserable; the world has been cruel to him; he is unknown, spurned, neglected. And he feels it, oh! so bitterly, just because he knows, he must know, what a god he is compared with his fellows. Do you know what will happen to him if he stays there in Ireland brooding over his wrongs alone? Jonathan's heart will break, and it will be

my fault. I let him love me, and yet refused to marry him. He will never love anyone else like that, so there is nothing for him but his work, and that the world denies him. Oh, Mrs. Dingley, I must go to him; really I must.'

'But, Stella, suppose he should not propose again?'

Stella crimsoned. Such total misapprehension implied a worse censure than the most vehement reproof.

'He must not propose to me. I will not marry him. I go only because I long to be near him and cheer him, and urge him on to the happiness of fulfilling his great destiny.'

Mrs. Dingley fairly started.

'Stella, are you mad?'

There was no answer, except that the glow which had risen on the girlish cheeks turned to ashy pallor. What horrid recol-

lections that word 'mad' brought to the trembling spirit!

'You must be dreaming, indeed you must,' pursued Mrs. Dingley, after a momentary pause. 'No one would ever speak to you again; you would be despised and looked down upon. Who would believe in the purity of such a dubious life? Nonsense, Stella, nonsense; you must not think of it.'

'Nay, but I must. I have. He needs me and I need him. Let the world slander if it will. But you—you will be kinder than that, won't you?' and the soft voice trembled.

'Come, come, child,' answered Mrs. Dingley, with gentle firmness, 'I don't profess to understand. You are a puzzle to me. But of course I trust you, poor little innocent that you are. Still, Stella, I should think it very wrong to aid and abet you in this matter. And I won't!'

The little white hands were stretched out imploringly, but there was no whisper from the moving lips.

'Help you to put yourself in so false a position? Impossible!'

'But I must go, and I cannot go alone. He would not see me if I went alone. It would ruin his usefulness. But, if you come, no one need know it is to see him. Living is cheap. We are poor. It might be that. We can always go together. People will be unkind, but only to me, only to me, because I am a woman. They will not slander Jonathan—there will be no ground for that. Oh, do come!'

'Stella, poor child, if you prefer Jonathan Swift's reputation to your own, I had better go with you. You need taking care of, too.'

As for Jonathan, the news of this strange resolve fairly puzzled him. Look at it in what light he would, it seemed a perfectly inexplicable proceeding. No solution which his instinct could allow his judgment to entertain sufficed to explain the discrepancy between this bold, unmaidenly step and the character that Jonathan knew was Stella's. It occurred to him, of course, that she had repented of her decision as to himself, and was vulgarly fishing for the opportunity of reconsidering it, but equally, of course, the idea was unharboured for a moment. As a motive with Stella, the notion was a burlesque. He saw very clearly too, how great was the risk she was running, just as clearly as she did herself.

'The sisterly love of every female in the district will abound towards her, poor thing,' he sneered to himself. 'What on earth can have induced her to subject her reputation to the ordeal of Provincial Charity?' And so, with feelings of mingled curiosity, pain, and vague, uncertain hope, he met her when she came.

^{&#}x27;How do you do, Mr. Swift?'

'How do you do, Miss Johnson?'

This was the difficult point, but Mrs. Dingley was on the watch to prevent embarrassment.

'Why, Mr. Swift, this isn't savage a bit! Surely this can't be Ireland, after all. You have deluded us, and are living in Hampshire, where meat and butter are the same old prices, and where ends can't be made to meet.'

'Do they live exclusively on guinea-pigs in Hampshire?' remarked Jonathan, risking a tortuous pun upon the proverb, in the certain confidence that nobody would see it.

'Never mind, it doesn't matter,' retorted the dame. 'The question is, what do they live on here? You have managed our house-hunting to perfection for us. This nest is a credit to your taste and business capacity, and if you had remembered to order in something to eat—— You are hungry, Stella, are you not?'

'I'm very sorry,' pleaded Jonathan. 'It entirely escaped me. I will see what can be done at once.'

He did, and by the simple contrivance of having no dinner at the rectory. When the necessary agencies for accomplishing this end had been put in motion, he returned to the little sitting-room, to renew his apologies for the oversight. Mrs. Dingley had left the room. Stella was there alone.

'It was very thoughtless of me, very,' began Jonathan. 'My only excuse is the amount of work I have to do, and things I have to think of. This charge is far from being a sinecure.'

'You have much to do, then?' queried Stella, glad to hear of whatever concerned himself.

'Endless worry and bother from morning to night. It is wearing and pre-eminently unsatisfactory. I do not look underworked and overpaid, do I?'

She looked at him in answer to his question, quietly, composedly, with no light shining in the lustrous eyes but that of friendly concern, and then said, quietly too, though her heart was beating fast from the scrutiny,

'No, you do not look well. You look tired, and yet it does not seem to me the tiredness of overwork.'

'A blindfolded horse driving a pugmill always seems tired, even the first thing on Monday morning. Is that what you think?' he asked.

'Oh no; surely yours is no want of sympathy springing from want of sight. That would not be like you—as you were—at all.'

'Possibly not,' he answered; 'but I have changed for better or worse. No, that is an equivocation. I have changed for the worse, distinctly for the worse. And you—do you retain all your initial be-

liefs, convictions, sympathies, uninjured?'

There was a little tremor in her voice as she bravely answered, 'All,' and offered up as she said it the heartfelt prayer to Heaven that, come what would, so she might always be able to answer, even unto the end.

'Yet you too are alone in the world, as I am. It is difficult to believe anything alone. Possibly that is why I begin not to believe in myself, and doubt is a step towards contempt. How can we sympathise with what we despise?'

'Yes,' she said, 'I am alone too, and sometimes it is very, very lonely, but it is not a loneliness like that. You cannot mean such dark loneliness as that. The world for me is still filled with immortal souls created in God's own image; even though they do not love me, though I have no friends, though I am quite alone, still I feel there is the common brotherhood and

the common Father. But to despise—nothing but despise—is it not nearly hating, will it not end in hating? And then, heaven forbid it! you will be alone—in a world of devils. You did not quite mean it, did you?' she asked, appealingly.

And Jonathan, sorry to have pained her, smoothed some of the gloom from his brow, and answered as she wished. But Stella was not deceived thereby. 'Changed for the worse, distinctly for the worse.' Yes, truly. What anguish to know it! What a conflict was this upon which she had entered! Was it already too late for victory, or was there still time?

'Is the parish a large one?' she asked, forcing herself away from the idea.

'Not for a parish, but huge for a prison.'

Then Stella saw that she must be as David to this Saul, if the spirit of darkness were to be exorcised. Assuming an air of preternatural gravity, she remarked,

'When, amid the resounding shadows of the great unknown, chaos proclaims the evanescent triumphs of Nature's crumbling ruins, and the voice of astonished Destiny demands of the trembling Future, "Wherefore, oh thing, is this?" then perhaps——'

'Then what? I beg your pardon,' asked Jonathan, fairly startled.

'Then nothing at all; but you don't suppose you can claim a monopoly of making inconsequent statements, do you?'

'Inconsequent!'

'Certainly. In talking to a lady it should always follow that she likes to hear what you say, and as it assuredly did not follow that I liked what you said, it was inconsequent.'

'Hardly, if that follows,' retorted Jonathan, glad of some use to put his wits to, even the most trivial.

And, seeing it was so, Stella put the spirit of her love into the dead corpse of her vivacity, and made it dance and sport as it had done in the days of yore, when a soul of his own animated him. Mrs. Dingley, meantime, was continually appearing with an infinitude of household difficulties for Jonathan to overcome or perish in the attempt, and thus giving him the almost forgotten sensation of being of some real use to somebody.

The time seemed to have passed wonderfully quickly when he rose to go, warned by the voice of his messenger singing in the road as he passed that the rectory dinner, of which he had deprived himself, had arrived for the ladies. (Eatables were not easily procurable under two days' notice at Laracor, so there was the tangible self-sacrifice involved in his little gift that he himself would get nothing for dinner but eggs and bacon.) So Jonathan went home better pleased with what in the language of philological philosophy is called his environment

than he had been since Lord Berkeley's presentation. Also, he was more mystified than ever as to the real object of Stella's change of home. She had contrived in the course of their conversation to give a dozen very good reasons for the step, but there was an atmosphere of ladies' logic about them all so unusual to arguments adduced by her that Jonathan was puzzled what to make of them.

It is significant of the power of expression possessed by manner, if you will have it so, or more truly, as I think, of the direct insensible communication of soul with soul, that Jonathan knew from henceforth with a certainty which no revelation from this world or the next could have shaken, that Hestor Johnson would never become his wife. So innately, indeed, did he know it that the idea of her having come to Ireland for that never again entered his head. Remember this, reader, because it is the key

of the life these two led afterwards, so far as concerned each other—that life which has been so terrible a puzzle to chronological biographers ever since.

CHAPTER VI.

Henceforth Jonathan had only one object in life—unless the accumulation of money be an object worth mentioning—ambition in its lowest sense; the satisfaction of his self-love, the feeding of his passion for aggrandisement. Such was his persistent work for seven years. He was preparing for an opportunity, and lying in wait for it: amassing stores of learning on every subject, but more especially politics, to be used when occasion offered, and saving all the money he could for a lever and a shield.

Stella at first helped him, egging him on in his quest; but ere long she discovered he needed no such stimulus. It was not the want of an object in life which was throwing him more and more in upon himself, souring his temper and darkening his brow, quite the contrary. It was because his ambition was his all, and because he could not realise it. Then she tried hard, poor thing, to counteract the poison, but there was no power left in her to do so. The magic of her influence was broken. Jonathan loved her in a sense, but not as he had once done. There is no gradation between being a friend and a lover. They are two distinct things.

Jonathan was very deeply fond of Stella still, and would do a great deal to please her, but that was all. She was second to his ambition now, second to himself. The love which is life is a growing love. Arrest its vital increase for an instant and you destroy it. Growth is as much the essence of love as motion is of light, and

quiescent light is darkness. It was only as his wife that he could have loved her more, and that she would not be; so the rest followed.

· As year after year passed away, the power that Stella had once possessed to check and purify the lowered ambition of the sombre, sensitive soul of him whom she so passionately loved, grew less and less. It was not because Jonathan's respect and affection for her grew less, but because his ambition grew greater, until it became an absorbing passion. An absorbing passion—yes, the one principle of his existence, the exclusive motive of his life, the one consolation for the past, the one hope for the future. The solitary charm which, with its dreams of haughty triumph, could banish even those hideous visions of the Thing he never mentioned even to himself, and the place where they kept his fellows who were poor. Yet no doubt though, in her

main object, Stella was doomed to certain failure, the influence of her presence and society upon Jonathan must have been considerable.

It was on her account that he began by degrees to break through the absolute monotony of his life by receiving occasionally a few friends at the vicarage, and devoting an evening to penny ombre. At these little gatherings Mrs. Dingley and Stella gradually came to be recognised as joint-hostesses, and so well did they manage matters that Jonathan, finding the inroads on his purse to be very small indeed, never objected to have the party repeated. There was no difficulty about guests. The people who had once come were always glad enough to come again.

Presently Jonathan found himself looking forward to his receptions with a good deal of pleasure, and suggesting to Stella that they should be held on two days a

week instead of one. It was, among other things, a novel and pleasurable sensation to him to be treated with the deference always accorded to a host, and still more markedly when the host is a clergyman. It was not taken for granted that nothing he said was worth listening to; but, on the contrary, the visitors laughed at his jokes and applauded his paradoxes with distinct partiality. In his little circle he soon acquired a reputation as a great wit, a reputation of more consequence to him than he imagined at the time; for it spread, and stupendous results came of it. By the way, while all very well in the case of a really great man, it being of the highest concern to us all that such should become known somehow, almost anyhow, still these local introductions to celebrity are responsible for half the bogus reputations which the world persists in supporting in defiance of rhyme and reason. Everybody is not a poet whom Edinburgh

worships, nor a statesman whom Birmingham applauds. It would lengthen this history unduly were I to dwell on the years thus spent, important as they were to the development of our hero's character; but, to enable you to understand the feelings with which Jonathan grasped at success when it came to him, let me exhibit to you, gentle reader, one day of his life after he had vegetated at Laracor until the year of our Lord, 1704.

It was a dull, misty morning when Jonathan woke, and the heavy clouds gave ample promise of a patriotic Irish downpour; so he made up his mind to stay where he was for half-an-hour, and enjoy a quiet talk with his still favourite author, Montaigne. He had hardly become interested in the thread of that wonderfully ingenious muddle of remarks on court education, when the unwelcome recollection came to him that his horse was lame,

and that he was engaged to marry two parishioners of a neighbouring clergyman, who was prevented by illness from performing the duty himself.

Reluctantly laying down his book, he dressed himself, and proceeded to his morning meal with a grumble at his old and ugly, but very faithful, housekeeper's extravagance as illustrated in two dishes for breakfast.

By the time he had finished, the rain was descending in torrents. A good many of the good shepherds he knew would have let a poor pair of farm-labourers wait to be married throughout all time rather than walk for two hours through such a bath to oblige them; but of such was not Jonathan. He put on the oldest coat he could find, and gave the very last employment it would ever sustain to a left-off hat, and started on his errand. The circumstances suggested to him a self-congratulatory sentiment

which is a very fair lactometer of the milk of human kindness.

'The world has treated me—as might have been expected. However, there is some satisfaction for me in the consideration of how I treat the world. I have never sacrificed the interests or feelings of any individual to suit my own convenience or well-being. Bah! Life would be unendurable if I were one of them.'

At the church door he put as far away as possible such considerations, and always tried very hard to honestly address the congregation as 'brethren.' On this particular morning, after the service was concluded, the happy bridegroom advanced to pay the parson his customary fee. He was very poor, as most people who get married in Ireland are. He looked hungry. Jonathan asked him whether that were so, and, being assured of it by receiving the equivocating answer that they would have a good

dinner shortly, hesitated to take the wretched optimist's money. There was a singing in his ears, however—an ailment, as he called it to his friends, though he himself knew better; visions of there rose before him. He shuddered, put away half his compassion, and took half the money. He despised himself for it, but 'that little paltry ailment of a noise in my ears,' and the fits of terrible despondency which usually followed them, had mastered him—save he must!

Darkened, and out of even the spirits of the morning, he called on the way home, as was usual with him when in such moods, at Mrs. Dingley's cottage. The place itself seemed always to soothe him. A much poorer dwelling than Manor Cottage had been, still it was a pretty place, and the ladies' constant care had made it very home-like. Seventy-seven pounds a year was all the joint income of its mistresses,

yet, nevertheless, there was no atmosphere of poverty about it; for Stella, by ever-recurring acts of self-denial practised daily—yes, hourly—managed to keep the difficulty she had in making ends meet away beyond the possibility of worrying Jonathan—out of his sight. So to him there was nothing to disturb the air of quiet and repose which the cottage wore, nor reduce the charm of the contentment borne in by sympathy upon his soul. Little did he know how many real privations poor Stella suffered to keep up the delusion.

Mrs. Dingley prescribed a glass of hot port-wine and water (as an antidote to Jonathan's clothes), and then allowed him just five minutes by the clock for a chat before marching him off to the parsonage to get himself dried.

- 'Who is coming to-night?'
- 'Dr. Raymond.'
- 'Ah, capital! Dr. Raymond is going to

bring somebody with him—guess who,' said Stella. 'No, you can't guess; he has just come to Trim for to-day and to-morrow—Dr. Sterne, the Dean of St. Patrick's, who desires the honour of Dr. Swift's acquaintance.'

'Strange; I must be making a name in the world without knowing it, if so great a man as he has heard of me at so great a distance as Dublin. Perhaps at last Henry St. John will have to look to his laurels.'

'Stella had a letter from him,' remarked Mrs. Dingley, 'and he says on his honour, whatever that is worth in a statesman, that he would rather be buried at Laracor than be Secretary of War. He wishes the Earl of Nottingham and his friends had stopped in office for ever rather than that their retirement should have forced "poor puzzled me," he calls himself, into their shoes just now. He and Mr. Harley get on capitally, however.'

'What,' cried Jonathan, 'you have a letter from a Minister of State and still alive! Alas, how low has our hero-worship fallen! I am not on my knees in anticipation of the dean, and you——'

'When did Mr. St. John last write to you?' interrupted Stella.

'Oh! before he was Secretary of War. Thinking so much about fighting must interfere with one's capacity for friendship. Of course it is *that*, not the position.'

To which Stella only answered by telling him to be less bitter when others were present in the evening, because 'it pains me to hear you so unjust. However, it is only because you are cold and wet. Go home now,—I flatly refuse to say another word to you.'

Back at the parsonage there was coldmutton dinner to be eaten, and then some arrangements about the glebe to make. The latter took up a good deal of time, because a certain burly farmer who was concerned came fully an hour late. He apologised—mark it, reader, and remember that Jonathan was well-used to such apologies—'I was with Farmer Scroggon, a substantial man, and as either you or he had to wait, why I couldn't help it.'

'You were quite right,' said Jonathan. 'It would pain me exceedingly if you preferred me to Farmer Scroggon,' and then proceeded to business.

Jonathan, from the date of his mother's death, never received even the suspicion of an insult or a slight from a social superior without instantly demanding an apology or cutting his acquaintance. The same conduct from his inferiors was met by a grim smile. This by the way.

The glebe farmer disposed of, Jonathan settled down for a couple of hours hard at work on his sermon for Sunday. He was not of the number of those brilliant curates

who write a discourse in twenty minutes. After all though, they do well to save their labour, vacuity being preferable to premeditated nonsense. As a matter of fact, it was of very little consequence whether Jonathan's sermons were good or bad, as the audiences to which they were delivered were exceedingly limited in every respect. Writing a note to a London bookseller (of which more hereafter), he expressed it, to quote his own words, 'I am at this minute very busy, being to preach to-day before an audience of at least fifteen people, most of them gentle and all of them simple.'

Two hours' worth of sermon written, and the weather being now fine, he strolled out of doors to look at his willows and get his man Patrick's opinion about the lame nag, after which the rest of the afternoon was devoted to correcting the proof sheets of the 'Tale of a Tub.' Then the evening. It was as dull and uneventful as the day

usually, but this was an exception amounting to—how much? Let us see. Not very much, after all, as relaxation—safety valve—for the dark, troubled energies of that gigantic soul.

The regular guests were Sir Arthur Longford, a rich, neighbouring proprietor, of good manners and intelligence, but somewhat neglected education, who devoted himself alternately to dogs and politics, but whose native sense and good-humour made him an agreeable, if shallow, companion. Mr. Percival, an enthusiastic agriculturist on a large scale, in every way-I mean, both himself and his enterprises—and overflowing with scientific absurdities about the growth of corn and potatoes. Mrs. Percival, a quiet, unassuming little woman, who listened with religious deference to her husband's conversation, and when he stopped for breath always said, 'There now! Dear me!' Mr. Westley, a pompous man, four VOL. III. H

feet ten inches high, who had made his money by trading to the Indies, and who divided his time between the paternal acres he loved so well (chiefly because he had paid-off the mortgages upon them) and Bristol, the scene of his main financial triumphs; and Mrs. Westley, a machine for playing penny ombre and doing fancy needlework.

These were the five leading parishioners who attended the doctor's 'evenings,' to laugh, talk, discourse, and be generally companionable to him! It really detracts from one's opinion of the imagination which pictured Lilliput to see Lemuel Gulliver actually associating with pigmies like these. On the evening of the day which we have happened to select as an illustration of Jonathan's life at this time, his circle was considerably increased, however. Dr. Raymond, the neighbouring vicar of Trim, whose visits were necessarily rare on account of

the distance, was of the party, and with him came Dr. Sterne, the Dean of St. Patrick's, and Dr. Aske, the Bishop of Clogher.

Dr. Raymond was a clergyman of the very best stamp, broad-minded, generous, and, withal, impulsive—a merit in my eyes. I hate your Italian strategists. He greatly admired Jonathan, regarding his genius with a feeling little short of reverence, and it was to his encomiums that our hero was indebted for the friendly visit of the two great men—the dean and the bishop. This evening, therefore, was a red-letter exception to the ordinary run. Let me sketch it briefly. Between the lines it may indicate all the more vividly what a precious little furze-bush Jonathan's soaring ambition was reduced to perch upon during those long years.

CHAPTER VII.

THE party from Trim came early, as a party from ever so many miles Irish, in an Irish car, is apt to do unless it is ambitious of being late instead; so Jonathan had some time alone with his distinguished guests before the insignificant ones put in an appearance. After the usual salutations, the bishop began to take the measure of his host without losing valuable time.

'Our brother of Trim has given you a character for wit, Dr. Swift, that will require all your inspiration to support.'

'If I can draw in my breath as easily as I can draw in my horns in your lord-

ship's presence, there will be no difficulty about that,' responded Jonathan, graciously.

'What! Dr. Swift; a pun?'

'For which I need scarcely beg pardon,' answered Jonathan. 'I was bound by your remarks to perceive some analogy between my wit and inspiration, and, as it was certainly not one of idea, I suppose it must be of words.'

'Never mind,' replied the bishop. 'We will never quarrel over a pun, unless, certainly, the question arises as to which of us made it first; for I am proud of my puns, and cherish them with paternal affection.'

'Thank you; then we shall probably never quarrel at all; for, if my memory serves me, puns have been the one apple of human discord all through time. The Temple of Janus would never have been built if words had only had one meaning.'

'Take care, for mercy's sake,' put in Dr.

Raymond, 'don't, whatever you do, let him loose in a theory unless he is hobbled; he is worse than a horse at grass to catch again if you do. He will construct a philosophy of puns, starting with the Alexandrian fathers, or the Trojan war, or the invention of printing—anywhere you will—and prove to a demonstration that quibbles have been all through history the basis of human society and the ground-work of morals.'

'Barring the personalities,' retorted Jonathan, 'all that is too obvious to require support. But that is not the strongest part of my case. Alas! no; consider the disastrous effects which have resulted from the "converse pun," the two words with only one meaning. It is horrible to think of. Why, positively the world is at loggerheads over Homoousion still. But worse yet—the last class of pun, the two words or two dozen, or two hundred dozen that haven't got any meaning at all! Oh! yes, one

meaning to two words is bad, but no meaning to ten is certainly much worse.'

'I told you what would happen if once he fairly started,' interposed Dr. Raymond, with mock deprecation. 'Your blood be upon your own head if you go home with a confused notion that polygamy is nothing more than a pun upon marriage, and five bottles of whisky a sitting a pun upon temperance.'

'Talking of that,' said Dr. Sterne, 'who is that polygamous woman I see coming up the pathway yonder. Great heavens! her husband is four times her size, at least. If the law is a question not of letter but of spirit, that woman has married four men.'

'On the contrary,' remarked Jonathan, 'if it be a question of spirit she can hardly be said to have married a man at all.'

Then the Percivals came in, and the regular business of the evening began. Mr.

Percival plunged into a discussion on the potato question with the bishop, and Mrs. Percival listened, as was her wont, and said, 'Dear me!' at stated intervals. The bishop tried diversion after diversion, but all to no purpose.

'Our host is a very clever man,' he remarked at length, striking wildly out from the tuberous roots.

'Certainly he is,' returned the irrepressible agriculturist. 'His knowledge of potatoes is very great certainly; he has had advantages, however, for I have spared no pains to impress upon him the various peculiarities of that invaluable article of diet, and, though there are not many subjects upon which I could instruct Dr. Swift, I certainly can upon this. My forte is potatoes.'

'There now! Dear me!' said Mrs. Percival.

'There now! Dear me!' echoed the poor, persecuted father of the church, with

the unconscious imitation of deep feeling.

Stella presently drew off the attack upon herself, and left the great man to the comparatively genial fellowship of Sir Arthur. Dr. Sterne meanwhile was enjoying Mr. Westley immensely.

'My position is a peculiarly hard one,' that worthy was saying. 'You see, my dear dean, no one has better blood in his veins than have I, yet to all intents and purposes I am a self-made man, for money, after all, is the standard of worth in this grasping age.'

'Perhaps, after all, too,' remarked the dean, 'society is not far wrong in estimating a man by his money. You see, it is the thing most people know most about, everything else is uncertain. It is improbable they will think a man poor who is rich, but it is highly likely, for instance, that they will think him a fool who is wise.'

'That is just my view. But, if you can

get blood too, it is better. Still, as I was about to remark, these things have their drawbacks. Now in Bristol, where there is money enough, but no blood, I am positively worshipped. If my head were not proof against such feelings, it would be turned by the respectful deference which is always paid me there. Ah, I must confess it is bad for a man, very bad,' and the little gentleman puffed himself out with self-gratified humility.

'It is a most interesting case,' answered the dean, 'from a spiritual point of view. Does it not strike you as strange that Satan should attack you at your strongest point?'

'Queer now,' replied Mr. Westley, with complacent unsuspiciousness. 'Dr. Swift said very much the same thing when I mentioned the subject to him. He said that, if he had been Satan, it would never have entered his head to attempt to make me vain.'

Thereupon Dr. Sterne took snuff with vigour, and asked, as a further diversion, to be presented to the great little manakin's wife. Meanwhile, Jonathan was amusing the bishop and amazing Sir Arthur with his remarks on the political situation. Dressed, but not hidden, in a garb of flippant carelessness, the shrewd clear sense of his views and proposals did not escape Dr. Aske.

'After all is said and done,' remarked the bishop, 'the one great difficulty statesmen have to face and the empire has to fear is the Irish question. Irish disaffection is a worse danger to England than forty French kings. And how can you get over that?'

'Why, my lord, I believe that some day statesmen will discover that the best way out of the Irish difficulty is not to have one.'

^{&#}x27;Eh?' queried Sir Arthur.

^{&#}x27;I mean,' said Jonathan, 'that the cli-

mate of Ireland is not fatal to yeomen from Kent, nor that of Virginia to labourers from Ireland.'

'An opinion which, I suppose, you do not publish from the pulpit, whatever the soundness of it may be?' asked the bishop.

'Not yet,' answered Jonathan. 'Drastic prevention is impossible in modern politics, and the disease is not bad enough yet for such a drastic cure.'

I wonder if Dr. Jonathan Swift would think the time come yet, after twelve years, during which almost every variety of crime in the name of law and without the name of law has been perpetrated against the loyalists of Ireland, for the benefit of traitors and assassins?

Perhaps, gentle reader, this slight sketch will sufficiently serve the purpose I have in view without further delineation of the people and the chat; so let us bid the guests adieu, and proceed in a new chapter to record what came of it all.

CHAPTER VIII.

Nor long after Jonathan's introduction to Dr. Aske, the 'Tale of a Tub' was published. It appeared simultaneously in Dublin and London, and prefixed were two of the cleverest dedications ever written—the one to Lord Somers, and the other to Prince Posterity. That to Lord Somers was the fruit of three several motives. Jonathan fancied himself to be a Whig. That is, he approved of certain constitutional principles, and believed the Whigs approved of them too, whereas the Tories did not, and Somers was the greatest and most representative of the Whig statesmen. Further,

by dedicating the book to a politician of eminence, it ran a fair chance of being rated as a partisan production, and attract the notice of that large body of men who can better appreciate polemics than wit. And thirdly, though I am loth to say it, in the hope of some good thing in return for the delicately implied compliments the dedication contained.

Probably, however, Lord Somers would never have read these compliments (in which case it may very certainly be assumed that neither would Prince Posterity) but for the Dublin edition. The authorship was no secret, and that was sufficient for the dean and the bishop. They read the book, and the book only needed reading to be assured of its success. It became the rage in Dublin, and London followed with obsequious admiration.

Of course, it was more than St. John's position as Secretary of War was worth to

publicly praise a performance which—thanks to the dedication—people talked of as a violent Whig libel; but, as he cordially agreed with every sentence in it, he found means to serve his old friend quietly and effectively.

'Alas, Oh Jonathan! my son, my son,' he wrote to Swift, 'why did you choose Somers? You know—let not the truth make you ashamed—that the motives which led you to present the work to anybody at all were purely egotistic. Well, Somers cannot serve you just now, and, as to us, you fancy you hate our politics and would sooner dedicate your book to the Pretender himself than to Harley, even though a bishopric were the immediate reward. Then, why in the name of ordinary prudence did you not let well alone? How many changes may happen before Somers can repay you, and meantime, meantime, Jonathan, you have tied the hands of the

one man who loves you entirely, and who would make you both Archbishop, Cardinal, Pope, whatever you would, could he but find the means. Now then, however, my fall when it comes will be sweetened by the recollection that it leads to your promotion.'

Advancement or none, politically speaking, Jonathan had now made the first step towards lasting fame. He had, as they term it, 'created a sensation.' The sensation too was of the most valuable kind to the personal estimation of the author, for it was one of admiration not unmixed with dread.

'Wit may be feared, good-nature is adored; Then draw your wit as seldom as your sword,'

writes Young, in that brilliant poetry which this accomplished age does not care for; and the sentiment is just in every way except in the implication that being feared is always incompatible with a character for good-nature. So far from this being the case, it is scarcely possible to have a legitimate reputation for good-nature unless the world knows there is a claw inside the velvet. The inane helplessness of the man who does not make cutting observations because he cannot, rarely passes for kindly consideration. There are heaps of people who draw their wit just exactly as seldom as their sword, and for the self-same reason -they possess neither. In fact, the man with a reputation as a bitter wit, is precisely he who can most easily gain one for good-People are grateful for being nature. Giving quarter makes a friend even of the man yourself have wounded.

So Jonathan found it. The world began to come round him. Letters and visits from all classes and conditions of men poured in upon him. At first strangers came, with, as it were, their tails between their legs: were treated with benignant condescension

and went away frisking. Even his old acquaintances began to applaud his tender mercies and regard him as much more individually agreeable than they had ever suspected before. Then his character for good-nature helped his character for wit. When he was with Jones and Brown and Robinson and was dull, as the most brilliant of mortals are apt to be in such society, Jones thought it was because considerate Dr. Swift did not wish to eclipse Brown and Robinson, and Brown and Robinson thought it was because kindly Dr. Swift could not bear to show Jones his level. Jonathan was up in the world. Laracor was too small to hold him in future. Dublin and London were the only two places sufficiently central to serve him for a stage. It was there the business of the empire was done, and he was warmly encouraged by the dignitaries in church and state to take his share in the doing of it. Jonathan was not the man to bury himself any longer when such an opportunity presented itself. Admitted at last to the lists, he felt that the prize was his. To run the race was to win it. So Laracor saw gradually less and less of him, and the great people in the great world, more and more.

There was just enough in this to whet poor Jonathan's insatiable appetite for fame, still fame, and spur his vaulting ambition. Nothing more. Everybody liked him, admired his genius, feared his wit, and respected his character; but up to the year 1706 he was no penny the better for it all except in prospect. A good many of those who could most easily have served him, did not care to run the risk of helping to make him too great, and, moreover, the Tories clung obstinately to office, so that his political friends were not in a position to make a bishop of him, had they been never so willing. Jonathan well understood the various forces which held him back, and met them by the publication of his next work, 'A Project for the Advancement of Religion and Reformation of Manners.' This book he dedicated to the Queen, and his old friend, the Earl of Berkeley, presented it to Her Majesty in person. Queen Anne was delighted with it. Her good intentions assisted her sense.

'Dr. Swift must be made a bishop,' she remarked. 'Is there a see vacant? No? Never mind. Don't let me forget, Mrs. Morley, when anybody dies.'

This was another step in advance. The prospect was brightening. Jonathan was informed, of course unofficially, of the intentions of the Court with regard to him, and was proportionately elated. After settling matters as well as he could in Ireland, he crossed the Channel to further his interests in London; knowing well that it was above all things necessary to keep himself

before the minds of his would-be patrons if their promises were ever to become concrete realities. There he found matters apparently most promising; the best-informed were the most confident as to the certainty of the Queen's intentions. He was fêted, bepraised, bowed down to, and presently, to crown it all, a bishop did die. There had been some time to wait certainly but it had seemed short amid the whirl of a novel liondom, so there was nothing to detract from the pleasurable certainty which possessed him when he wrote as follows to Dr. Sterne:—

'London, April 15, 1708.

'SIR,

'I wonder whether in the midst of your buildings you ever consider that I have broken my shins, and have been a week confined this charming weather to my chamber, and cannot go abroad to hear the nightingales or pun with my Lord Pem-

broke. Pug is very well and likes London wonderfully, but Greenwich better, where we could hardly keep him from hunting down the deer. I am told by some at Court that the Bishop of Kildare is utterly bent upon a removal on this side, though it be to St. Asaph; and then the question must be whether Dr. Pratt will be dean of St. Patrick's, minister of St. Catherine's, or provost? For I tell you, as a secret, that the queen is resolved the next promotion shall be to one of Dublin education. This she told the Lord-lieutenant.'

It was a transparent rise this promoting by anticipation of Dr. Pratt. Jonathan was already installed in imagination as himself Bishop of St. Asaph, and the queen, to do her justice, fully intended the same thing. The appointment would have been highly opportune to Jonathan's finances, which, in spite of his nervous, grasping economy, were sadly waterworn by the tide of London life;

but, above all, it would have replaced him in the full current of active philanthropic life, and in the course of time there might have come back something of the old grand longing, a little of the true ambition of his earlier years.

It was not to be; but meantime all his friends congratulated him as though the fact were existent. The Lord-lieutenant the Earl of Pembroke mentioned above wrote a cordial letter full of vile puns. Peterborough was delighted, and poured copious libations to the whole episcopate. Lord Berkeley began to think his shabby treatment of his old secretary had been all for the best, after all, and congratulated in the same breath the earl and the doctor. Halifax was inspired with a tranquil pleasure, and expressed all the tepid satisfaction of which his nature was capable. Joseph Addison asked him to dinner twice in one week. Steele, not yet Sir Richard, borrowed five pounds from him, to be repaid out of some good turn which the Bishop of St. Asaph would certainly be able to do his friend; and St. John—St. John was not so sure. He called on Jonathan one evening after dark, assured him of his best support, congratulated him on the fair prospect opening before him, but took care to say before leaving,

'My dear doctor, don't forget we are all in the hands of Sarah. Don't be too disappointed if the duchess gets the better of the queen.'

This was the only word of warning amid a chorus of voices proclaiming victory, and Jonathan paid it scant attention. There was no reason why everybody concerned, from Her Majesty downwards, should deliberately mislead him; and, in default of such reason, Jonathan did not believe they would. He was perfectly right, but there was a very good reason coming.

Among those who had been scandalised by Stella's removal to Ireland, nobody had been so deeply shocked as the Rev. Mr. Sawder. He resented the step with all the intensity of personal pique, which fancies itself righteous indignation. Nay, more; in the composition of his wrath there was an element of self-satisfaction that he, who had been so greatly injured by this penniless girl's refusal of his love, should condescend to still protect her interests and revenge her wrongs, undeterred by the recollection of her folly and bad taste.

Mr. Sawder, in short, was very angry indeed because the unblushing preference of Stella Johnson for Dr. Swift cruelly hurt his self-love, and he was all the angrier because he did not even to himself acknowledge this motive as the one which actuated him, but clung to the idea that his wrath was the outcome of a generous sympathy

with an injured woman who had outraged his tenderest feelings and triumphed in his misery.

(The reader will not forget that, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the case, Stella's letter of refusal had been forwarded to Mr. Sawder through the medium of his rival.) So, as Mr. Sawder's was a righteous indignation—in his own eyes—or, more than that, a benevolent and all-the-beatitude-like heaping of coals of fire upon his adversary's head, it had the other peculiarity of such wrath, and was ten times more bitter than the great majority of purely mundane bad temper. Therefore, directly he heard through the news-letter a rumour of the anticipated promotion, he wrote the following letter to Archbishop Sharpe.

And pray, reader, do not call him names for so doing. Remember that few of the crimes and follies which have stained history would ever have been perpetrated had their authors understood as clearly as do we the motives which inspired them. Perhaps, in that case, the virtuous actions might have been fewer too, the good deeds less plentiful. Fewer patriots might have lived for their pockets and their fames, and fewer martyrs have committed the absurd idolatry of dying for—themselves!

This was the letter:

'Your Grace,

'Having heard that Her Majesty intends to promote (under your gracious approval) Dr. Jonathan Swift, Rector of Laracor and Rathbeggin, in Ireland, to the see of St. Asaph, I beg humbly to lay before your Grace the following reasons why this should not be so. Dr. Swift is a debauchee and a villain. During his residence at Moor Park, in the capacity of Sir William Temple's secretary, he made

the acquaintance of an orphan girl in whom Sir William took great interest, and who was living at the great house as a sort of humble ward. By the vilest wiles he led this unguarded child from the paths of virtue and religion. Even his removal to Ireland did not induce him to break the shameful tie. His prey was not allowed to escape. He used his blandishments to entice the wretched girl to follow him. She did so, and has been living ever since at the gates of hell.

'The girl's name is Hestor Johnson. She lives with a ghastly imitation of propriety, with a venal woman—a creature of this bishop-elect!—in a house hard by the rectory. This woman's name is Dingley. Your Grace, I am bound to tell you this shameful story. To leave it unsaid would choke me. Can you wonder at my just indignation? For the truth of what I say I stake my character. Indeed, there is

no reason why I should lie in a matter so easy of proof.

⁻⁴ I remain your Grace's humble and devoted servant,

'ROBERT SAWDER.'

Some short time after, the Duchess of Marlborough—the Sarah Jennings of doubtful character and of Charles's Court—was talking to her humble friend and follower, Queen Anne.

'I cannot believe it to be true,' said the painfully weak sovereign.

'Do you mean to say I don't know what I am talking about?' replied the exceedingly strong subject.

'Not at all, my dear; but--'

'But! fiddlesticks, the man is a brute, and I hate him,' replied the reformed beauty. 'He is as bad as the Duchess of Cleveland. The light way in which you regard such things is disgusting. The

death of your children is a judgment on you for it. You shall not make him a bishop. Besides, he is hideous. Now, can you answer that?'

The last of the Stuarts shook her head, and Sarah had conquered.

CHAPTER IX.

The evening after the conversation between 'Mrs. Morley' and 'Mrs. Freeman,' Jonathan entertained some of the chiefest among his acquaintance to a dinner at the 'George,' in Pall Mall. It was a gay party. Nobody had the spleen; all were determined to be amused, and, if possible, amusing; and Jonathan, for an hour and a half, believed the sun had gone back for him, and that life was worth living again. It was with a lighter heart than he had known for years that he went home to his lodgings. The world was smiling on him, and to one unaccustomed

to its caresses the sensation was intoxicating. Besides, was he not to be a bishop within a few hours; and what a prospect did that open up. Visions of an ecclesiastico-political supremacy floated before him. The Protestant Church might at length supply its Richelieu. Why not? With his mind full of such dreams, and elation in his eye, he reached home. There was a letter on the table, and a ragged urchin was waiting for him at the door.

The boy stood hesitating when Jonathan entered, but just as he had picked up his letter from the hall-table, and was turning to close the door, the little fellow burst out:

'Sir, we've got a man dying at home. He's sort of mad-like, and talks all day of the holy angels, and King William, and poison, and a girl called Lauriel and her brother, Jonathan Swift; and somehow he heard of you, and he says he has a message

for you, and you must come. Mother says it would be a Christian charity. He will never die happy else, I doubt. Sir, you'll be too late; he was going fast hours ago.'

Jonathan had turned very pale. The forgotten letter was unopened in his hand. With an effort he steadied himself.

'Where is he? Show me!'

And the next instant the two were walking rapidly through the back slums of Old London.

'This is the house, sir, the top storey.'

There, in the worst room of a hovel, poor Pringle lay dying. He was dressed, and, when Jonathan entered, he struggled to his feet by a supreme effort.

'I knew you would come—I have watched you coming. You are just in time. Listen. I meant to kill him, to tear him to pieces. Had he not wronged her? He lied, I knew he lied, and I was going to make him confess it. And I have

hunted him all these years. But it was hard. My money was soon all gone. I had to starve myself to save, and then my strength went from me. I followed him on foot all over Europe, losing him often, for he had money, he could travel as he would, but always finding him again sooner or later. And I worked for my living as I went, and waited for an opportunity to do the deed, but it never came. My heart was heavy, I was old before my time, and only the great love I bore my murdered darling kept me up; for I felt I must revenge her and must clear her name. Now I am dying, and I have not done it; but hush! last night I saw her, and she spoke to me. Was it not kind and gracious? She spoke to me so tenderly, although I was only poor Pringle the butcher, who had never done anything for her except love her with a great, great love.'

^{&#}x27;Saw her !-saw Lauriel!'

'Hush! "You have given more than a cup of cold water," she said-"you have given your life. It has been mistakenly, but never mind. It is motive that our Master judges by, and therefore the infinite love of which yours is a part permits me to soothe you now." But while she spoke I wondered, for I could read her heart—how I know not, but a ray of light illumined it. And I could see that she was sad, though she was talking of glory and happiness infinitely blessed that they should have who lived for others more than for themselves. And presently the ray of light revealed to me a dark figure standing close beside her, enveloped in a thick black cloud. It stood on nothing, and nothing touched it above or around, unless perchance a strand or two was still unfrayed of a silver cord that I thought altogether broken, and which bound it to God Almighty. And Lauriel—but that is not the name by which she is known in

heaven—was ever striving, even as she spoke to me, to flood the darkness with a golden light that the figure might no longer be alone, all alone, standing upon nothing, and nothing touching it above or around. In vain, utterly in vain, and therefore she was sad. For the cloud was as outer darkness, and the radiance failed to pierce it. Then it came to me that the figure was ever growing greater by mighty efforts that it made, and I knew, too, that it paid no heed to the cloud in which it was enveloped. Around were a few watching the clouded figure, but many did not seem to see it; nevertheless there was a great crowd coming, away in the distance, to applaud the greatness of the huge black giant and to sing his praises. For them the figure struggled to be greater still, and the cloud grew even blacker. But, as I became more accustomed to the light and the darkness, I saw that multitudes passing by had strange

disorders afflicting them. They were mortal men; they were suffering and sinful. And ever and anon they looked sadly towards the giant, for he was furnished with mighty powers for their good, yet did not use them thus, for the cloud had shut him in and touched him. For himself he used them that he might grow the greater, against such time as the multitude in the distance should arrive, and that the applause might be the louder. And Lauriel left me, weeping; and I saw her kneeling far, far away by the side of a little boy, passionately praying before the Great White Throne.'

He paused exhausted and sank back on the pallet, then started violently, and, pointing with his finger close by Jonathan, he whispered, with almost his last breath,

'She has come back again with a brighter light. I can see through the cloud now. You are the figure.'

Extremely agitated, Jonathan stood for

some time absorbed in silent thought. A sob aroused him. He stepped to the bed-side, but Pringle was there no longer! Jonathan laid his open but unread letter on the bed, and reverently closed the dead man's eyes. Then, as with decent care he was placing his handkerchief over the white face, he chanced to notice the signature of the letter. Henry St. John. Involuntarily he paused to read the lines preceding.

'You had better hear it from me than from an enemy or envious friend, so I hasten to tell you, very regretfully, that your hopes are for the present disappointed.'

More followed, but Jonathan did not read it. With a terrible look on his face he crushed the letter in his hand, and forgetful of the warning from the grave that had just been given him, forgetful of the dead man lying here who had given his life for Lauriel, forgetful of everything but the agonised pride that was gnawing at his heart, he strode gloomily away out into the midnight.

CHAPTER X.

CIRCUMSTANCES were such as made it impossible for Jonathan to hide his wounded feelings away in his Irish home. Stay he must, at any rate for a day or two, to endure the sarcasms of envious acquaintances and the gall and wormwood of friendly sympathy.

St. John was the first to call upon him and offer what condolences were available. An understanding, to say the least of it, which had been semi-officially announced, and the fulfilment of which would no more than fairly have rewarded the great man whom it concerned, had been overturned by

an unaccountable freak. What could poor St. John do?

'It is all Sarah's fault,' he said, 'I am convinced of it, Jonathan. I will revenge you, and you shall help me. We will make peace and give the duke a holiday.'

'Pray, don't mention it,' was Jonathan's answer. 'If you make such promises, the Temple of Janus will never be shut again.'

After which, it said a good deal for Henry St. John's good-humour that he went away without any of the sore feeling which a man wrongly suspected of participation in a shabby trick usually feels. Perhaps Prior offered the only real salve for the bitter smart when he carried a letter from Alexander Pope to Dr. Swift, soliciting in most complimentary terms the honour of his acquaintance. Peterborough, who was just off to Vienna, took up the cudgels vigorously on his friend's behalf, and said so many unpleasantly severe things at Court about 'tabby cats,'

that St. John, tottering as he and his friend Harley were to their fall, managed to obtain a tacit treaty of peace with the spiteful duchess on condition of an offer to Jonathan of the Secretaryship to the Viennese Embassy. Jonathan was half disposed to accept the offer. He was miserably disheartened. Disappointment after disappointment had crushed his spirit and had almost extinguished his hopes.

'It has taken me forty years of my life,' he thought, bitterly, 'to conquer the stupidity of the world around me. That is nearly accomplished, but I am beaten; for now there is envy and venom to conquer that is stronger than the stupidity, and I have not forty more years to spare.'

While he hesitated, a letter from the Archbishop of Dublin decided him.

'As to your own concern,' wrote Dr. King, 'you see hardly anything valuable is obtained otherwise than by the govern-

ment; and, therefore, if you can attend the next Lord-Lieutenant, you, in my opinion, ought not to decline it.' (His Grace was referring to a wild Irish rumour which had it that Jonathan was to be the Earl of Wharton's secretary.) 'I assure myself you are too honest to come on ill terms: nor do I believe any will be explicitly proposed. I could give several reasons why you should embrace this, though I have no objection against your secretaryship except that you may lose too much time in it, which, considering all things, you cannot so well spare at this time of day.'

'No,' he thought: 'truly at this time of day, and when those around me begin to speak of it as such, there is no time to spare. I will stay nearer home, and not publish to the world my discomfiture by retreating from the scene of conflict.'

So, impelled partly by pride, and partly by the courage of despair, Jonathan refused the offered post, and returned to Ireland to live down for a while the crushing sensation of irretrievable defeat.

He had become, however, too well known to those in authority, ecclesiastical and political, to be left long in the crypt-like seclusion of his Irish parish. No matter what they might choose to do for him, the rulers in Church and State had at length discovered what he could do for them, and were quite disposed to avail themselves of his services. The times too, were stirring. St. John and Harley had fallen very soon after the above occurrences and had been replaced by men who had no objections avowed or hidden to a 'Whig war.' Somers and Halifax were the powers once more. Wharton was Lord-Lieutenant, Addison being his secretary, and with all these people Jonathan was supposed to be in complete accord politically and, more or less so, socially as well. 'Supposed to be!'

Jonathan was beginning to find out the real meaning and drift of 'Whig' liberty—of Whig politics generally. He was discovering that, so far from being the real patrons of individul freedom, the Whigs were the unbending supporters of tyranny by a majority of one. The world did not see it then as he did, but the development of the same principle has made by this time the correctness of his diagnosis a matter of history. Nevertheless, it took him time for these feelings to assert their supremacy. Nothing is more difficult even for the strongest and best regulated minds than, once being caught in the web of party, to break loose again. So meanwhile Jonathan preserved, as I say, his character for whiggery, and on account of it was requested by the Irish bishops about a year after his return to Ireland to negociate with the government the question of first-fruits.

The see-saw of fate had given him an-

other opening-another pass, as it were, into the vestibule of fame. We all know what came of it so far as appeared to the world. Very little, nothing I had almost said; and yet in reality from this time dated an abrupt, immeasurable change in Jonathan's inmost soul and character. Up to this time he had preserved one safeguard against the absolute supremacy of the 'black cloud' which enveloped him. True he had lost all the early faith he once had cherished in his fellow-men, true he had begun to regard humanity with a bitter, hopeless cynicism, true his lip curved at the very mention of self-denying generosity, and a cold gleam lit up his eye when virtue in any of its forms was attributed to a son of Adam; but—he himself was, so far, to himself, an ever-present refutation of the feelings which he cherished. As yet he did not despise himself. That was something! How much the unconscious light

shed from that instinctive self-respect relieved the gloom which oppressed poor Jonathan's spirit he did not as yet know, nor could he have imagined. Alas! that the darkness could be deeper!

It was a miserably cold day in October when Jonathan left Dublin on his way to promote the disestablishment of the Irish church by making it less than ever a direct source of revenue to the English crown. Stella and Mrs. Dingley came from Laracor to bid him God speed, one of them with a heavy heart. Since his last English visit, Stella had seen Jonathan slip gradually further and further from the grasp of her sacred care and divine ambition. He was not the Jonathan of old now, far from it. Yet she loved him more passionately than ever with a love that was verging on despair—for him. This visit to Dublin was the most public demonstration of affection for Jonathan of which Stella had been

guilty. For at Laracor the conventionalities of society were always so strictly observed between them that, although the closest intimacy had been added to the old love, still it was only the spiteful among the neighbours who pretended to be scandalized. Indeed she came against her knowledge of what was best and wisest, impelled by a nervous presentiment she could not conquer of evil to Jonathan that this English journey was about to bring forth. It was not judicious, especially as by some unknown channel it became known to Dublin society that, after bidding farewell to Dr. Swift. Miss Johnson had been seen in tears. Some one asked, when she heard it, 'Is she Miss Johnson, or is she Mrs. Swift?' and the question was repeated more than once.

Well, as I remarked above, it was a miserably cold and stormy day when Jonathan left Dublin. He crossed the Channel

in a government yacht, but the weather was so bad that only one other landsman availed himself of the opportunity. This was a Mr. Vanhomrich, a young English gentleman of position and fortune, pretty well known in the fashionable circles of London life. He was a man of vivacious temperament who looked upon life as something to talk in, and who was never unhappy except when fate imposed on him the necessity of silence. Once fairly on board the yacht, he gave himself up for lost. The sailors and officers were one and all hard at work fighting the storm. Not a syllable could be got out of any of them, and the sea looked more sociable than Jonathan. However, Vanhomrich thought he would try. Gradually working along the deck towards the austere ecclesiastic in the distance, he presently managed to clutch the rope by which Jonathan was balancing himself, and, waiting for a pause in the storm, shouted out,

'I think I have met your cousin.'

'I'm so sorry you are drowned already,' was the doctor's apparently irrelevant reply.

But Vanhomrich was too wise to investigate the meaning underlying it.

'Oh, never mind,' he called back, when the wind would let him. 'Let's go below decks and talk about it.'

Jonathan saw several reasons in favour of the same course of conduct, not the least being that there was a very considerable chance of being washed overboard up on deck; so, holding cautiously by each other and the ropes, they staggered to the companion-ladder and went below. Once there,

'What a mercy you are here,' remarked Vanhomrich.

'I suppose I shall see it in that light some day,' answered Jonathan, 'but from the standpoint of flesh and blood it seems rather the reverse in the meantime.'

'Oh, I don't know,' was the cheery reply. 'If you will give me the pleasure of your company, we shall have quite an enjoyable time of it—especially after Ireland. But, pardon me, perhaps that is your native place?'

'No, my dear sir. No, I am not of that vile country, I am an Englishman.'

'What a mercy!' pursued Vanhomrich.
'So am I. We are all coming over to live in England all the year round now. While my father was alive, we had to spend a month or two every year in that ghastly abomination of a place, Dublin. But I won't stand it any longer. So I packed my mother and sisters off to London, sold up our Irish establishment, and here I am.'

'What is your main objection to Dublin?' queried Jonathan, amused at the other's communicativeness.

'Oh! the people are so inquisitive. The first time I was there, everybody knew who

I was and all about me in twenty minutes.'
'Very odd,' answered Jonathan.

'Isn't it?—and it is not as though we were out of the way or remarkable for either being or possessing. You may have heard my name, though—Vanhomrich; my father had a good post given him by King William—Commissary of Stores. It was best during the war, but a capital appointment always. My father made a great heap of money out of it, at any rate. It is a good thing we were well connected (my mother's relatives are all crême de la crême), or we should have to put the money-making achievements under a bushel.' The voluble young man pulled up breathless.

'Yet, in spite of being so little extraordinary as all that,' remarked Swift, 'the Dublin people found you out! Why, I should really think somebody must have told them!'

Vanhomrich laughed.

'No, no; upon my word, I never opened my mouth. I scarcely ever do. The fact is, people inquired and ferreted about a good deal, because, as bad luck will have it, one of my sisters is fearfully pretty—at least, so they say, though, to be honest, I never could see it.'

A deep shade passed over Jonathan's face, and he drew his hand wearily across his brow with the almost mechanical action which had become habitual to him when the dark memories rose up in more than their usual distinctness.

'Don't you feel well?' asked Vanhomrich, in a tone of such native good-hearted kindliness that Jonathan could not help liking him for it.

'Perfectly well, thank you,' he answered; but the young man did not seem quite to credit the statement, for he balanced his uneasy way to his cabin, whence a few minutes later he emerged with a bottle of

claret and two glasses of a shape convenient for board ship conviviality.

- 'Well or unwell, this will do you good,' he remarked, oracularly.
- 'So I believe,' said Jonathan, accepting the proffered glass.
- 'By the way,' asked Vanhomrich, 'did you ever meet anybody who thought it wicked to take a glass of claret? I did the other day. He stuck to it, too. What do you think?'
- 'I think,' answered Jonathan, 'that there is no morality for men other than that revealed in the Holy Scriptures. I know that, while there is much in the Bible denunciatory of drunkenness, there is not a word in reproof of a moderate indulgence in alcoholic liquors. I know that this is the case, in face of the fact that the Israelites were very far from being strangers to the vice of drunkenness, so much so that the first explanation which occurred to a

Hebrew mob, on a memorable occasion, of the Apostle Peter's—to them—strange conduct, was that he was drunk. I know that there is not a word against reasonable drinking in the Epistle to the Romans, and yet what tongue can describe the contemporaneous orgies of Rome? And I know that if the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles all through Revelation have no syllable to utter against using without abusing one of God's greatest gifts, why—no more have I. Every Israelite in our Saviour's time drank wine. Had He not done so on principle, the fact must have been recorded, or the Revelation of His morality would be incomplete. If He did drink wine, to call the doing so a crime is a blasphemous falsehood. Then as to the example. By all means set an example of temperance; but do not lie and blaspheme for the sake of keeping others sober. Blaspheme in saying it is wrong to drink wine, or, by totally

abstaining, lie in pretending you think it to be wrong when you do not.'

'Bravo!' cried Vanhomrich. 'What a mercy it is to come across somebody who can really talk! I wish you would call on us in London.'

The sea was meanwhile rising higher and higher. The ship started and shuddered as the great waves brushed her angrily like dust from their surface. The wind screamed in the bare rigging with mad exultation. Crash after crash announced that another spar had yielded to the fury of the gale.

'It must be a grand sight on deck,' remarked Vanhomrich.

'If it continue long,' was the answer, 'there is a very reasonable chance of our never seeing as grand again.'

Just then a terrific roar as of thunder told the fall of the foremast.

'It is time we helped,' cried Vanhomrich, making as he spoke for the companionladder. 'I sha'n't be drowned, if I can help it.'

The two men gained the deck together, and, before they had time to realize their position, a tremendous sea, sweeping clean over the disabled vessel, carried Jonathan away into the ocean. Vanhomrich, whose hold had been tighter, and who, besides, had been partially sheltered from the full force of the blow, gasped, shook himself, and wiped his eyes before he observed to his horror what had happened. Simultaneously, he caught a glimpse of Jonathan, whom a returning wave had carried almost within reach of the fallen rigging, which, stunned and helpless, he was making no effort to grasp.

The chance was little more than instantaneous; the risk terrific. But Vanhom-rich seized the almost hopeless opportunity and plunged into the water. A providential movement of the vessel favoured his heroic

Jonathan and the wreckage; then a movement or two of desperate physical exertion to keep his hold while tying Jonathan's inanimate form to the saving rope flung down to them, and then on deck again, half-drowned, utterly exhausted, but proudly conscious of having saved a life at the risk of his own. An hour later, Jonathan had recovered sufficiently to thank his preserver.

'You have laid me under an obligation so tremendous that I shudder to think of it. That I should have been particularly sorry to quit this life—in which I have had but little joy and much bitter, crushing grief—I will not say. But, believing as I believe, life itself, no matter how wretched, is an inestimable gift. This you have given me. I owe you a gratitude I can never express.'

He felt what he said, felt it in every

nerve and fibre. He did owe a colossal debt of gratitude to this gallant fellow. Not to have seen it so, believed it so, known it so, would have been despicable—brutish. Alas, Jonathan Swift, Jonathan Swift, what would you not have given in the days to come that the weight of that debt might be lifted from your soul, and the memory of it blotted out for ever!

CHAPTER XI.

On a very different day from the one last depicted—one soft and sunny as the smile of innocence—the Vanhomrich family were on the tip-toe of expectation, awaiting the promised visit from their brother's treasure trove. Master Jack had painted his half-drowned friend in such glowing colours that his mother and sisters, one and all, entertained in a vague way the idea that Jonathan was—at any rate, when dry—not so much a man as a demi-god. That Dr. Swift was an ugly, gaunt, sour-looking mortal, with no external merit to recommend him, except his uniqueness, was quite

outside the speculations of both girls and mother.

So it happened that when, from the vantage ground of the lawn where they were sitting, the ladies saw Dr. Swift for the first time as, accompanied by Vanhomrich, he deviously approached them, there was a unanimous exclamation of disappointment and disillusion. Nor did the bad impression wear off when the introduction was accomplished and conversation began.

Jonathan was doubly out of his element. Circumstances that morning had worried him exceedingly, so even his ordinary vivacity was under arrest, and yet at the same time he felt obliged to be, in defiance of his humour, as agreeable as nature and ingenuity would let him to the family of the preserver of his life. He was very often most brilliant when most tormented. Pain and annoyance ground the edge of his wit. But they ground it to a cutting

edge, and you cannot play rackets with a razor. Therefore, on this occasion, he was at a terrible discount—all the conversation being rackets.

Anne Vanhomrich, the only one of the family who will much concern us, was of a different type of woman from any with whom Jonathan had ever been thrown much in contact. Passionate, careless, outspoken, and impulsive, she was withal good-hearted.

'People think her terribly pretty,' said her brother; but he was only half right. Pretty, they did think her. The terror lay not in her exceeding good-looks, but in the capriciousness of her temper and the not-to-be-forseen variations of her humour, which pitilessly snubbed one minute the favoured hero of the last, or restored, at a moment's notice, life and vitality to some shivering wretch whom her last sentence had condemned to a week of London jeering.

Men made love to her in a spirit of enthusiastic self-preservation. It was an amusement analagous to tiger-shooting, and Anne Vanhomrich's votaries were consequently legion. Several of these infatuated beings put-in a wonted appearance on the afternoon of which we have been speaking, and Jonathan was glad enough to stroll away under cover of the crowd to enjoy a quiet chat with Jack outside the range of his sister's caustic indifference.

- 'You're ill?' said Jack.
- 'No, not at all; why do you think so?'
- 'Because you're—' but he hesitated to say 'stupid'—' not so brilliant, sparkling, crackerwise, what do you call it, as usual. My mother, there, thinks you are only an average curate, and as for Anne—Dr. Swift, do me the favour, just take Anne down one or two pegs, will you? That girl will, seriously, be the death of me some day soon. There is hardly an afternoon passes

but some man or other goes away cursing the day he was born, and only too anxious to pick a quarrel which will revenge on me my sister's confounded conversational ability. There, now look at Lord Lechmere, he's white with passion and taking snuff by the ounce. I know what it means when he takes snuff by the ounce,' and the poor fellow turned despairingly on his heel.

'Who is the man who looks happy because Lord Lechmere is taking so much snuff?' queried Jonathan.

'That. Oh, that's Monte. Monte's an ass to look happy. Just wait a moment, won't he catch it.'

True enough, so he did. Indeed, before long all the masculine visitors were enjoying a venomous balm for their own wounds in the shape of the discomfiture of everybody else.

'Funny,' muttered Jack, savagely, 'they Vol. III.

seem to like it. An acquired taste for gall and wormwood. There, see, she has laid a trap for Sir Richard de Void. Same old trap; but I lay you a crown to a penny he walks straight in. Do look, he hasn't the slightest idea whether it is this world or the next; she smiled to him for some bread and butter, and I'll be hanged if he can find it though it's just under his nose. When he does find it he will probably upset it, what between delight, and fear, and trembling; then he'll pay her some egregious compliment and——' he expressed what would follow by a very subdued whistle.

'Never mind,' said Jonathan, willing to comfort the exasperated young man, 'never mind. She likes it and it can't hurt them.'

'Oh, doesn't it though,' protested Jack, with vehemence. 'One fellow was going to drown himself, only just in the nick of time he came into an earldom and reflected that

it would hurt her more if he didn't. But life is a burden to him: he no more dare meet her than he dare meet the Evil One himself, and he's on the look out for the most venomous wife he can find on purpose to sting her with. Then there was Will Crudemore, she drove him a voyage to Ceylon, and had the face to cry when she heard it. And as for duels!!' another suppressed whistle. 'Dr. Swift, do make the town laugh at her. Save her from herself, my friends from her, and me from my friends!'

'I certainly enjoy overcoming difficulties,' he said; 'but then I only encounter the ones I feel that I can master. Ladies are not in my category of decipherable problems or conquerable obstacles. They are found out by feeling, and vanquished by love, or some of the modern substitutes for it, such as humming and hawing, talking with a drawl, or looking vacant, and it is

my misfortune to have no feeling, be beneath love, and above the substitutes.'

This, however, was not strictly and accurately true. Jonathan inwardly fancied that there were few women in whom he could not inspire a feeling of nervous admiration, if he chose to try, even after making all due allowance for the heavy handicap of civility which burdens a gentleman in such a contest, and from which in practice, if not in theory, a lady is exempt.

'You are all wrong,' answered Jack.
'Matt. Prior is not one of that class, and he is the only created individual I know of who can fairly keep Anne in order. I believe, you know——'

'What? Matthew Prior is a friend of yours,' interrupted Jonathan.

'Yes, and, I was about to remark, a very particular friend of my esteemed sister. Yet she crushed him, even him, last week, and he has never come back—I daresay never

will. Confound the woman!' (turning savage), 'and he one of the most amusing and best fellows alive. Do you know Prior?'

'Oh, yes; I have known him off and on for some years past—in the same way, that is, as I know everybody else—when they think I can do them a service.'

'Dear me! dear me! is Mr. Prior dying? What did you say about his last sacrament?

The exclamation came from Anne, who approached to reclaim her brother to the realms of civilized work. Lord Lechmere and Sir Richard were with her, basking in a transitory gleam of sunshine.

'Nothing,' replied Jonathan, with as much careless contempt in his manner as good breeding would allow. 'You did not overhear correctly; but, had I known the conversation interested you, I would have spoken louder.'

'You are too modest, Dr. Swift. Don't

you know that the world at large is always agape for your polished and genial wit?'

'True,' he answered, blandly; 'I have had a fair share of success, but nothing comparable with the run there will be on my modernised version, "Taming the Shrew." It is nearly ready, and is sure to be largely read in London society.' Saying which, he glanced compassionately at Lord Lechmere and the background of bachelors. Then, as she did not seem ready with an appropriate retort, he quietly resumed the thread of his discourse with Jack.

'I am glad you know Prior. We must have a little dinner together somewhere. Not to-morrow, however. To-morrow I am going into the country to visit Mr. Pope, and don't quite know when I shall get back. That reminds me of my letters. They must be written to-day or wait till next week, so good-bye—I must be off.'

While Jonathan was excusing himself to Mrs. Vanhomrich, Anne managed to disengage herself from her numerous suitors, and when, with a sublimely gawky bow, our hero approached to bid her a distant adieu, she said, with confidential amity,

'Come, Dr. Swift, you mustn't go away angry. I didn't mean to be rude—really I didn't. Frankly, I thought you would not see my sneer at a "professional" service to Mr. Prior. Please forgive me.'

All this with the most pleading, irresistible eyes and a penitential manner worthy of the confessional. Just then Jack, in a fever lest Jonathan should also be caught in the 'same old trap,' hurriedly came to the rescue.

'Now, Anne, it's not the least use your—'He got no further.

'There's a good boy, Jack, please go away and keep all those men from plaguing me. Dr. Swift and I want to make peace quietly. Here comes Sir Dickon. Stop him, like a darling.'

Jack did as he was bid. His irritating pet sister ordered him about just as readily as she did everybody elso. So, with an affectionate grumble of acquiescence, he intercepted De Void, and left astonished Jonathan to his fate.

'Come and talk.'

Jonathan was obliged to say yes. Besides he wanted to. There was a novelty about Jack's sister that was worth the waste of a little time to enjoy.

'Poor Sir Dickon thinks Jack a bore. Do you think me a bore?'

'Dear me,' answered Jonathan, 'that question shows a want of experience in your present occupation which I should little have expected. Do you really fish for pike with a trout fly.'

'Yes, if I prefer trout.'

'Then we had better go back to Sir Dickon.'

'Nay, Dr. Swift, don't be angry with me; I daresay I shall like you best in time.'

Jonathan in sheer amazement laughed heartily

'You are frank,' he said, 'so am I. It is my shield and breastplate as it is also yours. Judge of my invulnerability by your own. Tell me, have you conquered my friend Prior? Is he among the majority?'

'Mr. Prior and I have quarrelled; talk about something else.'

Jonathan thought she seemed less at home than usual on this special point: but perhaps it was only fancy.

- 'Because, you see,' he continued, with mock solemnity, 'I should be sorry to cut poor Matthew out. Sir Dickon and Lord Lechmere may take their chance, but Matt. deserves my consideration.'
- 'Really, Dr. Swift, why on earth should any living woman take a fancy to you?'

She had turned full round and was gazing at him with fearless scrutiny straight into his ugly face. His expression as he returned the gaze was much like that of a naturalist engaged on the classification of some brand new caterpillar. It was the quiet investigation of superiority. Anne saw it. The appearance of power took her fancy.

'Upon my word you are positively handsome.'

'Again!' laughed Jonathan. 'On no account waste your labour. Be satisfied with half the peerage, and leave a poor clergyman his enjoyment as a disinterested spectator. I am beyond the reach of everything save "Kudos."'

'Never mind,' was the answer, 'we shall afford each other capital sport, and at any rate it will irritate Sir Dickon, Lord Lechmere and—the others.'

Chatting thus, a quarter of an hour was soon gathered to its fathers, before Jona-

than observed that the company were gradually concentrating their attention upon himself and Anne.

- 'Dear me! Those letters, I must really be off. Good-bye.'
- 'But you promise to come the day after to-morrow and tell me all about Mr. Pope.'
- 'Yes, certainly, if you wish it,' answered Jonathan.

Sir Dickon had approached within hearing; she could not forbear the opportunity of having it reported that she had fairly snubbed the redoubtable Dr. Swift; so she said,

- 'If I wish it! Oh, pray do not sacrifice yourself for me. I will contrive to bear your absence with Christian resignation.'
- 'Very well,' answered Jonathan, looking all the time really grateful, 'very well, thank you; then I needn't come. Goodbye.'

At the gate he met Lord Lechmere, who,

mainly to annoy Anne for having shown Dr. Swift so much attention by pretending that he, Lord Lechmere, at any rate, did not care one whit, offered him a seat in his coach for the journey home. Jonathan accepted the offer. He did not care for the noble lord, but the coach saved him half-a-crown. As to conversation, the only sentence he subsequently remembered was this one, uttered after a copious inhalation of snuff had quieted the peer's mangled feelings and made speech possible.

'The hussey is after you: she thinks your conquest would give her a literary character. I tell you what it is, Dr. Swift, she is—excuse me, I mean no offence—an idiot to dream of such a thing. In spite of your reputation, you will gain more credit by her attentions than she can do by yours.'

CHAPTER XII.

A FEW days later, Jonathan discovered he was famous. Literary celebrity, high class appreciation, the subdued applause of the wise and witty were already his; but until now he had never been famous. To be frank, he liked it, just as everybody else likes it, as everybody likes good-nature, even idiotic good-nature, despise it as much as they may. There was a bubbling effervescence about its very emptiness which was sparkling and pleasurable. The women and children were cheering, and Jonathan heartily enjoyed the noise they made. Celebrity depends mainly upon wits,

famousness mainly upon women; and therefore the former is apt to be a trifle too select for commendation in chorus. So the unusual chatter and crowded bowing down were a very enjoyable novelty for Jonathan. All the padding of society began to worship him vigorously, and by giving him a transitory pleasure probably fulfilled the main object of its existence. Why was it all? Simply because he had been taken in hand by a fascinating woman who was determined to 'push' him. At first he was puzzled how to account for the sudden increment of his estimated importance, and, when he found out what was at the bottom of it all, his flushed self-love was perhaps a little hurt. Lord Lechmere solved the riddle by remarking one day,

'I told you so: the vixen's attentions will be worth an archbishopric. Devote yourself to her, Dr. Swift; the time might be worse employed.'

And Jonathan saw the truth of the observation even while resenting it. He found himself on a different footing in society from any he had had before. People who could not understand his mind copied, so far as in them lay, his body. Swiftian gawkiness and mannerism became the rage. The good, bad, and indifferent about him were equally bepraised and bequoted until at length Halifax began to regret he had never given, while he had the power, any more alluring bait than the 'poésies chrétiennes of Monsieur Jollivet' to this evidently rising sun, and the balance of the Whig magnates lamented with Lord Halifax. Things were in this state when St. John introduced our hero one memorable day to Robert Harley, Prime Minister of Her Majesty Queen Anne's last government. The lord treasurer was obsequiously complimentary: Jonathan, astonished. He had never heard much about Harley

except from the grand prototypes of modern daily papers, and those he had justly disbelieved, no matter what their opinions. St. John was always judiciously silent about his chief (as everybody was to whom the great man's reputation was of consequence), while as to the other party, the oracular silence of the brooder on his country's destinies left them but little to which to pin their want of faith. So when Jonathan discovered that Harley was a solemn impostor he was amazed beyond expression.

'How can a man of such very small calibre be here?' he wondered. 'The fellow is infinitely beneath Sir William Temple.'

Then it occurred to him that Harley was disguising his great parts in merciful compassion to the Irish curate, or perhaps with a view to test more completely what that Irish curate was worth. Actuated by the latter supposition, Jonathan exerted himself to the utmost. He was determined to

win a golden opinion from a man who could afford to display stupidity on any pretence. As for St. John, he saw through it all, and enjoyed the idea amazingly. The business of the meeting was naturally the main subject of discourse, because Jonathan was determined to have it so. He had his tithes and first-fruits questions to settle for himself and his friends, so he stuck to the point. That fact was the salvation of the Tory government. It did not allow him to completely gauge his error as to the Prime Minister's arrant silliness; for, barring Oliver Cromwell, English statesmen have always enjoyed a free grant of stupidity on Irish questions, and Jonathan remembered that when driven from the intrenched position of his first belief by some remark, more than conceivably idiotic, of the future Earl of Oxford. Had he fairly grasped the deplorable fact that Harley was intended by nature for a mayor of Birmingham, he

might very probably have hesitated before embarking his personal fortunes on so frail. a bark. It is pitiful to have to record it; but beyond all question Jonathan Swift was by this time susceptible to the influence of personal considerations in questions of national moment. Stella! Stella! and is this your demi-god? However, as it was, that afternoon's work was one of the best Harley had ever done. The gaunt Irish wit did not satisfactorily find him out, and, before the fatal knowledge came, the cords of a hundred motives bound him to the fortunes of this most contemptible—up till that time—of statesmen.

'So the Whigs did not treat you well,' remarked the lord-treasurer.

'On the contrary,' answered Jonathan, 'they did me the honour to accept such services as I could render without lessening the obligation by making any return.'

'There is a good deal in that,' was the

answer. 'But, if you look at it in that light, we shall be only too glad to be obliged to you.'

Jonathan smiled vaguely. He remembered the circumstance years afterwards.

'As to what you did for them,' continued the great man, 'the fault of your "Tale of a Tub" was that there was so little about a tub in it.'

St. John, stifling his laughter, made a remark about the introduction.

'True,' pursued Harley; 'but still Dr. Swift had better be less enigmatical in his future works. The constituencies require something which they can understand at a glance—something which is not above their capacity.'

St. John sighed; the fact was obvious in present company. As for Jonathan, he merely bowed as in the presence of one who ought to know.

'I do not suggest that as in any way

reflecting on your acknowledged powers,' plodded the premier, 'but only as suggesting that those powers require disguise. The great secret of success is masquerade. Conquest depends upon ambush.'

'But,' hesitated Jonathan, 'is not ambush a vantage from which one conquers only by subsequent discovery?'

'True, true; but it is generally wise to remain in ambush a very long while.'

Whereat St. John laughed loud and long. 'You are wise in your generation,' said he, and, feeling that course to be wisest in the meantime, forthwith took his leave, after engaging Jonathan to dine with him in the evening.

'Mr. Secretary St. John is immensely smitten with your abilities,' remarked Harley. 'You have much cause to thank him for the efforts he has made in your behalf. At the same time, though I by no manner of means always agree with him, I can

plainly see that this time he is right. He would have been foolish indeed had your great powers escaped his notice.'

'Such an expression of opinion from you, sir, is a high compliment indeed.'

'Not at all; the very barest of truth. Besides, you see, you are one of those rare birds, a universal genius. The mere appreciation of St. John might result from caprice, association, personal friendship, anything; but the man who can inspire the redoubtable Miss Vanhomrich and half the ladies of London with a tender sentiment, at the same time as he wins the regard of my distinguished colleague—let alone Peterborough, Addison, and those parsimonious Whigs generally—why, Dr. Swift, that man must have brains in his head!'

'Do you know Miss Vanhomrich?' asked Jonathan, a good deal surprised at the evident correctness of Lord Lechmere's diagnosis.

'Not intimately. Don't be alarmed,' answered the lord-treasurer, with a far-off resemblance to a smile, 'but I know very intimately about her. Come, don't protest, Dr. Swift. Politics now-a-days so much depend on society, that we all know how to appreciate a politician who can fascinate in a drawing-room.'

Then came some more tithes and first-fruits, dragged in by the roots, so to speak, and, after extracting an oracular promise which might mean a great deal, but probably did not, as to what the government would do for the Irish clergy, Jonathan departed, fairly pleased with his visit, but much more puzzled with his patron.

From that day dated his intimate connection with the ministry. St. John would have been glad long before to have imported him into the inner camp, but could not. Harley was chief minister in every respect important in such a question. His distant

and misinformed admirers called him a man of indomitable will. He was really an obstinate ass. Still he was obstinate, and he got his own stupid way nine times in ten. So St. John had to agree with his adversary quickly, or accept the disastrous responsibility of dividing the party to its own destruction. And further, of course, it was only from day to day that Jonathan began to formally renounce his former brothers-in-arms. I far from wish to be hard upon him. He honestly quitted the Whig camp. He found them out. They were then, as they have remained ever since, an artistic illusion. And very naturally, when he discovered that, he began at once to despise the sheet, the views, and the magic lantern. Still he need not have resorted from dissolving views to dummydom, nor would he but that it suited his convenience.

From the day of which I have been

speaking it did suit his convenience; and the rest followed. Poor Jonathan, falling so surely step by step, how sad will be your realization of the pathway you have travelled when the sun of success shall shade its blinding glare and leave you the reality of light! Let us forget it: let us go with him to triumph.

He was in his element now, a new element in every respect. The ministry made use of him, and they found he worked better when well fed. So they regaled him on the choicest considerations and most profuse promises. He was pontiff-political and commanded in chief all the expressions of regard the ministry could lavish. He drank of future greatness and ate to repletion of prospective supremacy. St. John had no hand in this. His real respect and regard for his friend would not let him, for any personal advantage, attach him to the Tory cause by delusive hopes. But this

made the gradual increment in St. John's apparent appreciation all the more delightful to Jonathan, when it came as it did For his old friend had never thoroughly fathomed the extent of Swift's capabilities until he came to work with him, and then the hopes which possessed the generous young statesman's soul soared far beyond Harley's promises. By degrees, therefore, Jonathan began to be a real power, present and positive, with the ministry; unofficial certainly, but far from unrecognized by the outside world. He began too—which was the best proof of the general estimation entertained of his position—to enjoy the delightful sensation of being asked to do everybody favours. All and sundry people besought him to do all and sundry things. Even the most unlikely of suitors found it their interest to bow at his footstool. Fancy the luxury of a letter such as this from the apostle of politics in

the pulpit; the only man who ever had put Godolphin in a temper; the cherished martyr of the evil days, and the triumphant if indirect cause of Tory supremacy.

'REVEREND SIR,

'Since you have been pleased to undertake the generous office of soliciting my lord treasurer's favour in my behalf, I should be very ungrateful if I did not return you my most hearty thanks for it, and my humblest acknowledgments to his lordship for the success it has met with.

'I am informed also that I am very much indebted to my great countryman, Mr. Secretary St. John, for his generous recommendation of this matter to his lordship. I should be very proud of an opportunity of expressing my gratitude to that eminent patriot, for whom no one that wishes the welfare of his church or country can have

so great a veneration. But for yourself, good doctor, who was the first spring to move it, I can never sufficiently acknowledge the obligation. I should be glad if you will command me, in any time or place, to do it; which will be a further favour conferred on, reverend sir,

'Your most faithful servant,
'H. Sacheverell.'

This palpable importance was balm indeed to the proud soul which had known what it was to be treated with the extremity of neglectful contempt.

St. John was delighted at the turn affairs had taken, although certainly his own position was to some extent weakened by Jonathan's special usefulness in the very department in which, up to this time, he had himself been the main, if not the only, stay of the Tory government.

'Harley will begin to think me worse than useless,' he laughingly remarked one day to Swift. But such a consideration did not in the least degree lessen his satisfaction at his friend's advancement. He pushed Jonathan vigorously in the only sphere where pushing was any longer of importance-in society. Swift was constantly at his house, and was treated there with a deference accorded to no one else. The secretary's guests were allowed to discover that at his house 'the doctor' was head partner. St. John frequently left to him the selection and invitation of the favoured few who were privileged to enjoy his cosy, though sumptuous, and frequently recurring semi-political dinners. And very coolly did Jonathan take it all. Supremacy was so natural to his haughty spirit that he accepted it as a matter of course. Writing to Stella, he tagged such information in anywhere, without deigning a word of comment, at the tail of chit-chat about nobodies and their doings.

'I dined to-day with Sir Michael Dudley, who was lately turned out of the commission of the Customs. He affects a good heart, and talks in the extremity of Whiggery, which was always his principle, though he was gentle a little, while he kept in employment. We can get no pacquets from Holland. I have not been with any of the ministry these two or three days. I keep out of their way for a certain reason for some time, though I must dine with the secretary to-morrow. The choosing of the company being left to me, I have engaged Lord Anglesey and Lord Carteret, and have promised to get three more; but I have a mind that none else should be admitted. However, if I like anybody at Court to-morrow, I may perhaps invite them. I have got another cold, but not very bad.'

Then, in his letter next day, he never troubles to remark whether he liked anybody or not, nor even utters a syllable about the dinner!

CHAPTER XIII.

The 'certain reason' (printed in italics in the above letter) was money. Jonathan's present life could not be supported on the incomings from his Irish benefices. He was forced not only to spend his little hoard, but became entangled deeply in debt. The position fairly horrified him. It clouded his enjoyment of the barren, though splendid, honours he had gained. Visions of that terrible place which might be the final goal continually haunted him. The venture was promising: the odds were long; but the risk was terrible. More than all his world-ly possessions had already been spent in

furthering his hopes, and more still was wanted—much more. The government aided him on a scale which their Grub Street literary hacks would have thought fabulously magnificent, but which was trifling compared with the expenses entailed upon him.

For some days before the letter quoted in the last chapter was written, the dangers of his position had been peculiarly present to his mind. A grand Court reception was about to take place. Prince Eugene was to appear in all his glory—little as the ministry wished to see him—and the Whigs would muster in force to do him honour. Go Jonathan must. He would be missed if absent, and Steele would have something to say about the renegade who would not even countenance the victorious commander. of his country's best ally. What about clothes, however? An accident had happened some days before to his Court suit,

and it was absolutely necessary for him to replace it or miss the reception. Yet the financial pinch was so tight that he positively could not muster money enough even for so paltry an expense; and as to his credit, whatever that might be with the ministry, it was exceedingly little with the tradespeople.

'Dr. Swift, I can't do it. I have a wife and family, and I must consider them. Your custom is not good enough to run risks for. You owe me over twenty pounds as it is, and, while I should be proud to serve you, I can't do it at my own expense.'

So had spoken Jonathan's tailor on the occasion of our hero's last visit to his shop, a small establishment frequented by the doctor on the ground of cheapness. Jonathan, with loathing in his soul, tried again a day or two later. He could not afford to let a tailor's insults interfere with his Court duties. This time the tune was different.

'Ah, Dr. Swift, I think I can oblige you. But one good turn deserves another. You might say a good word for me at Court. Your recommendation would be worth more to me than would balance the loss of supplying you for nothing. The notion only occurred to me yesterday. What do you say?'

'Say!' answered Jonathan—'that I will not sell my good word nor make my friends pay indirectly for my clothes.'

With which he was turning to leave the shop, but the tailor stopped him, in the belief that this high-mindedness was dictated by the consciousness of guineas in the doctor's pocket, and unwilling, besides, to irremediably offend a customer who had influence in spite of his poverty.

'Never mind, sir; I will trust you once more, even without any agreement about that.'

Whereupon Jonathan, stifling his resent-

ment, allowed the fellow to take his measure. On the way home he reflected sadly on the time when, years ago, he had been subjected to a similar ordeal of begging—yes, virtually begging—from the Merton tradespeople. With what different feelings he had done it then and now! Then the disgrace had been comparatively a pleasure. And why? It was for his mother then, and Lauriel; now it was for himself, and for himself—to go to Court! Then he thought bitterly, 'Perhaps the one object is as worthy as was the other.'

It was while the pressing necessity for money, money, still more money, was thus being hourly forced upon him, that chance threw him into the society of an old Dublin College friend, who had settled in London, and partly by hard work, but more by good luck, had amassed a handsome fortune. It occurred thus: The great Court reception over, and Prince Eugene, 'plaguy,

yellow, and literally ugly besides,' having been duly exhibited, Jonathan started to walk home, thus saving the expense of a coach. When about half-way, however, a heavy shower forced him to take shelter in a coffee-house, where he was moodily sitting pondering the uselessness of brains which could not even keep one dry, when a stranger accosted him.

'Having become so celebrated a man, you have a right to forget me, but I have not forgotten you. How do your blushing honours sit upon you?'

The voice recalled to Jonathan's mind the identity which the altered features hid, and he gladly shook his old friend's hand.

'No, I have forgotten a good many things I should be glad to remember, and remember a good many I should be glad to forget; but you are in neither category. Your old kindness——'

'Now, please let that story alone,' interrupted Stratford; 'you ought to be above gratitude now, even if there were (which there isn't) anything to be grateful for. You have been to Court, I see.'

'Yes,' replied Jonathan, with some bitterness in his tone, 'I live there almost much good may it do me.'

'I suppose it will in time,' cheerily rejoined Stratford. 'Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord High Admiral, Field-marshal Commanding-in-Chief, &c. The worst of those things is, though, the time they take. I don't like time—time is a nuisance. At least, in my business, what I enjoy is smaller profits, and getting them quickly.'

'You have done well, then?'

'First-rate. Sordid, certainly, very sordid; but still first-rate. I have an unholy love of filthy lucre, not for its own sake, I admit, not so bad as that; but money is a capital servant.'

'And the want of it a supreme master,' continued Jonathan.

Stratford, who was a shrewd man of the world, easily guessed the cause of Swift's emphasis.

'Yes,' he went on, 'even if I had your brains, and could call names by implication as cleverly as you do, I wouldn't spend my time on politics, especially if I were a clergyman, and had a conscience. The profession rarely pays anybody, and never an honest man.'

'You forget that one may not wish to be paid. There are higher objects than mere profit to work for.'

'Oh, yes, you do,' persisted Stratford, 'either in meal or in malt, and I hope you may get plenty of everything, rare though your luck would be. By the way, have you anything to do to-night? Any duke, viscount, earl, baron, or baronet to dine with?'

'The Duke of Hamilton, to meet Prince Eugene,' answered Jonathan; 'but I have a very great mind not to go, for he only asked me to-day at Court.'

'Oh! yes, you had better go,' eagerly put in Stratford, 'and see if you can discover anything from the prince as to the probable action of the Turks this summer in the Mediterranean. And to-morrow, are you engaged to dinner to-morrow?' Jonathan was not. 'Then come, if it is not beneath your new dignity, and dine with me. We shall be alone, or nearly so.'

The following evening, therefore, Jonathan dined with his old friend at his palatial residence in the then country district of St. John's Wood. The magnificence of the house and its surroundings struck him very much. He had been but little thrown into contact with merchant princes, and had inadequately realised before the weight and importance which their solitary possession,

money, conferred on them. The signs of a great but wise opulence were everywhere apparent. The furnishings, pictures, statues were worth a fortune in themselves. Even the ducal residence where Jonathan had regaled himself the night before was scarcely more perfect, and not a very great deal larger. He remarked this to Stratford while they were alone in an ante-room, admiring a masterpiece of Vandyke.

'As fine as his, is it?' answered the owner of so much magnificence. 'Yes, I daresay it is. But remember why. I have nothing to do with my money: he has everything to do with his. A whole county depends on him, or, for the matter of that, perhaps two or three. He has to repair the churches, drain the marshes, dig the wells, patch the roads, support the old women, pension the old men, and I—haven't. That is the great advantage of our aristocratic system. A man with an hereditary title and an estate

inherits a mass of direct hereditary responsibility which makes it positively difficult for him to evade doing at least some of his duty. A rich merchant, tinker, tailor, or thief has no such incentive to virtue.'

'Ah!' sighed Jonathan, 'how good you would be if you were a duke, and how good a great many dukes believe they would be if only they were city merchants. That is the chief advantage of our "city merchant" system. They all wish they were as good as dukes.' Then turning full to his friend, and dropping his tone of banter, he added, 'Remember, I know from experience that some of you are, and a great deal better.'

'Now do, please, let that story alone,' retorted Stratford, laughing; but the conversation was broken short by the advent of Mrs. Stratford, who, on the arm of Jonathan's fellow-guest, came to inquire of her husband whether he wished to dine that day or the next. Jonathan was forthwith intro-

duced to the lady's escort, and the little party proceeded to dinner.

'That is one of the richest men in the City of London,' whispered Stratford to Jonathan, as they entered the dining-room.
'I wish I had half his money.'

Our hero wondered somewhat at that when he presently discovered that Mr. Simms (Bill Simms, he preferred to be called) was a sententious fool, which is the worst, because the most obtrusive, order of the genus. Stratford, who was desirous of fathoming his old friend's real position, partly for Jonathan's sake and partly for his own, several times led the conversation up to questions of town extravagance, the exorbitant cost of coach hire, and the like, but it was difficult to divert Jonathan from his amusement of consulting the Simmian oracle.

'Yes, fuel is absurdly dear, Mr. Simms; what do you think?'

'Sir, if you as a clergyman will excuse my saying so, I blame Providence. Why did Providence make it coldest in winter, just at the time when one wants most heat?'

'I don't know,' answered Jonathan, gravely. 'Probably Providence never thought of that. I'm sure I hadn't.'

'Yes,' continued the grand old Simms, warming to his subject, 'nearly everything is wrong, even the most ordinary and accepted conditions of life are upside down for want of a little thought and scheming. Tell me, sir, isn't it true that when a man walks he sometimes trips over something and tumbles down? Tell me, sir, isn't that true?' Jonathan acquiesced without a murmur. 'And then, sir, when he falls, does he not fall on his head? Of course he does. And why? Because he walks upon his feet. If he progressed by jumping on his head (which might have easily been

arranged by making spiral springs of his hair) he would necessarily see where he was going, and *not* trip. But even if he did, by means of a pitfall or otherwise, he would, when he fell, fall upon his feet.'

'Hush,' said Jonathan, 'Providence might hear you and adopt the suggestion. Consider the bald men!'

'Nonsense, my dear sir,' persisted Mr. Simms, in all the fervour of proselytism. 'They would only be lame.'

After dinner, Jonathan, having had enough of his philosophical buffoon, seated himself by Mrs. Stratford, while her husband and Mr. Simms talked 'funds.'

'What was the story you were forbidden to mention, Dr. Swift?' asked the lady.

'An affair of the old college days,' he answered, 'when we were both young and foolish, and believed in a good action being its own reward. Have you never heard of it?'

'I think not.'

'My father failed, lost all his money. Stratford and—another—were my only two college friends. People thought the ruin was a trifle more complete than it turned out to be. Bailiffs were put in the house. We would have been turned out, and my mother was very, very ill.' He was speaking rapidly, with painful earnestness. 'Stratford paid the money, though he could ill afford it. He never expected to see a penny back. I believe it. I will believe it. We did repay him when things turned out to be better—a very little better, but still—now you know.'

'I am sorry you have told me. The recollection has pained you,' said the tenderhearted little woman, with a tear in her eye. And then, in spite of the company, she went and gave the husband she loved so much a hearty kiss.

While she was away, Jonathan, having

recovered from his temporary enthusiasm, wondered if there could have been any motive for Stratford's conduct, which, in the guilelessness of youth, he had never suspected. Could this self-sacrificing action have been really disinterested? Alas, poor Jonathan!

When the time came to go, the rain was falling fast.

'You cannot possibly walk,' said Stratford, when Jonathan mentioned his preference for that means of locomotion; 'the thing is impossible, you would be drowned.'

Then he took the bull by the horns and asked (they were alone together in a vestibule),

'Why do you walk, Swift? Is it because you cannot afford a coach?'

For a moment Jonathan felt inclined to resent the question, but the manner of his

old friend made such a thing impossible.

'Yes,' he answered.

'Then,' said Stratford, 'I won't have it. It pays me to have a friend who is Prime Minister's prime minister or more, and that won't last if you waste your health in these amphibious freaks. I will be your banker. No words about it. I will. Your turn will come. Some day I may be glad enough to borrow sixpence of the archbishop.'

I will not dwell upon this: the very idea of the whole matter is hateful to me. Jonathan did not knowingly sell himself: he had refused to sell even the recommendation of a tailor within a week before; but he knowingly put himself in a false position. Nor did Stratford directly and distinctly buy him. He would, under any circumstances, have been willing to do much to aid his old friend; but he did

more, and he expected, if half unwittingly, something in return. Be merciful, reader; remember Jonathan's temptation, remember his danger, the awful risk, the horrid fate to be averted, the gleaming prize to be won; be merciful over the quibbles by which he soothed, until too late, his conscience, and blinded until too late his moral sense. If he sinned, did he not suffer? You might sin as he did, but never could you know such an expiation.

CHAPTER XIV.

Jonathan's intimacy with the Vanhomrichs flourished amazingly. He liked 'Vanessa;' she amused him. She was a pleasing change after a two hours' chat with Lady Masham or the Duchess of Hamilton. So day by day he spent a longer time in her company, superintending her studies, directing her reading, writing joint-talent verses, and—but this he did not choose to consider—fanning the flame which was rising in her heart. Her mother and sister began by degrees to acquiesce in Vanessa's supreme disregard of the conventionalities of society in this particular

case, while Jack, with an honest and manly, if somewhat ungrounded, conviction of his friend's immaculate integrity, tacitly assumed that all this attention and companionship was the correct, though unusual, prelude to his sister's apotheosis as Mrs. Swift.

'Society,' that living illustration of the tail wagging the dog, had accepted the rôle of being pleased and reverent, let Jonathan do what he would, and determined to rejoice with cordial sympathy in the fashionable romance, though the laws of the Medes and Persians should stand in the way thereof. One person only was seriously worried by this attachment, to call it such, for the natural pique of mankind in general over its discomfiture was too universal to be deep. This person was Matthew Prior. He had months before this made up his mind that Anne Vanhomrich and he were perfectly calculated to make each other happy. He liked and admired her very much; respected her frank, honest ingenuousness, and was not afraid of her wit being well able to protect himself. Love her he did not. His heart was wrapped round by a memory. But he knew she would make him a very good wife and that he would make her a very good husband; and he had quite decided that thus it should be, and that at last he would settle quietly down to his 'Custom House jargon' by day and 'Solomon on the vanity of the world' in the evening. For Prior sadly needed to settle down, and he knew it. Success had been his in a peculiarly hazardous measure for such a temperament.

The reward of his somewhat vinous poetry and brilliant but reckless wit, had been this and that appointment at foreign courts where the mirth was wilder and the wit more reckless still. He had been

universally liked wherever he went, universally courted, universally deferred to, and—which affected him most—universally asked out to dinner. Some men could have stood it, but not many, and certainly Matthew Prior was not of the number. Consequently he found himself becoming less steady than he ought to have been, even in the light of the manners and customs of his time and set.

When this dawned upon him, he made a resolute effort to reform, but the work was a hard one, his will was of the weakest, and the temptations of his position as a poet, a society wit, and a bachelor with innumerable friends were tremendous.

'I could stay at home if I had one,' he reflected sadly enough, sometimes, 'and I shouldn't feel the company of the Baron von Dunk and the Dewit Swylishers nearly so necessary if I could read poetry with

Anne and build castles in the air with her about the next epic.'

It was not to be. Before the advent of Jonathan, indeed for long after and until the spell of his conversation had tardily won her heart, Vanessa had looked with kindly eyes on the brilliant author of the 'Nut-brown Maid.' Very probably she would have married him sooner or later if no one more fascinating than Lord Lechmere or Sir Dickon had nipped the growth of her affection. As it was, she had given him more encouragement than she cared to think of afterwards, when the scenes shifted. However, Jonathan did come, and without intending it altogether-let us do him what justice we can-conquered. Matthew Prior was out on the night's Plutonian shore again. The light he had sighted had vanished over the horizon. He grumbled very little to himself, and never to Jonathan. Only once,

at least, to be strictly accurate. The two friends met one afternoon. Another of the beautiful fêtes for which the Vanhom-richs were speedily becoming celebrated was to take place the same night.

'Are you going, Jonathan?' asked Prior, and being answered 'Yes,' 'Why are you going?' he added, with unusual passion.

'The scene will be pretty and the music delightful,' answered Swift.

Poor Matt. made an impatient gesture and replied that he did not think so, and should certainly not go. When Jonathan was on his way home that night he found Prior, very much the worse for liquor, in the hands of the night watch. Of course he interfered.

'Come, come, my good friends, this will never do. I am Dr. Swift, and this is Mr. Prior, the great poet.'

The explanation was nearly too graphic.

'A poet! No, no, sir. A poet only

calls you names, but this gentleman hit us.'

Some half-crowns overcame the difficulty, and Swift proposed to call a coach and see his friend home. This Prior declined, with alcoholic determination, to do.

'No,' he said, 'you've stolen my ewe lamb; I don't blame you. I'll be civil to you when I'm sober, but I'll be damned if I will when I'm drunk.'

Jonathan turned away and left him with a humiliating suspicion in his heart that Prior drunk was better than himself sober. Could it be that for the sake of a little romantic credit amongst people whom he despised he had positively and truly stolen his friend's ewe lamb and severed the silken cord which held him back from reckless, headlong vice? Could it be that he had paid for the transient, superficial pleasure of a few hours lively chat, the

half-tender, half-resentful admiration of redoubted beauty, and the envy of a dozen or two male bipeds, in blood money? Was he helping, or perhaps had he helped, to ruin an old friend's future for the most pitiably contemptible of selfish motives. The idea was not pleasant.

'Bah! She would not have accepted him at any rate,' he thought.

She; and what of her? That was a question still more unpleasant. It would not bear investigation. Dr. Jonathan Swift did not dare to face it. And striding savagely home he muttered to himself 'What despicable cowards we are.' Alas! all humanity was included in that censure now. There was no exception; no, not one. Is it becoming less terrible now if not less devilish to hate! hate!

CHAPTER XV.

One feels tempted at times to follow Jonathan Swift's example, finding it all too easy to hate! hate! hate!! What saves the vast majority of the few men capable of such a fate from hopeless, dark misanthropy is just what has saved Jonathan—self-esteem, in its broadest sense. They are conscious of being, if not a very little lower than the angels, at least a little higher than devils, total abstainers, Royal Academicians, and Old Whigs; and to the end of their journey they manage to jog along in the cheerful blaze of this deep-seated conviction, giving all the while man-

kind in general the benefit of the reflected light. There is the further safeguard also with most men (and it is the more usual as well as the more rational one), that they nearly all have, or have had, some friend whose transparent nobility of character and moral rectitude is a haven of refuge for their trembling faith in the true descent and destinies of man.

Still, I repeat, one does feel tempted at times to abominate the whole genus, and more especially so when, marking the degradation of a noble nature, our souls cry out against themselves, the conscious inferiors of what seemed so great, and yet is proved so little. When such is the case, look for a higher example, reader, than the broken idol could have been. Look, for instance, with me now, though I have hardly the heart to direct your gaze to that sad home, look at Stella. She was very poor, poorer now than be-

fore; for a certain mysterious source of income, which had put in a transient appearance as 'a legacy to Mrs. Dingley, from a distant relative,' had waned away into thin air and nothingness, and the original springs themselves had sadly suffered from the influence of war and sunless summers.

The poverty is a mere detail, however. I only mention it in order to show that the little household had plenty to do in making ends meet, and the general routine of self-preservation, if they so chose to ordain it, without spending valuable time and more valuable money on the beings a trifle more wretched than themselves. The point is one which deserves accentuation, because philanthropy is so universal—after dinner. So be it; they were poor, these two maiden ladies, lonely and poor. Are those two words Greek to thee, O reader? Then God grant they may so

continue! May no evil come near thee, and no plague come nigh thy dwelling! Or if, in the mysterious ways of Providence, disaster seems impending and escape impossible, then redouble thy petition to be saved at least from utter loneliness when the worst shall come. For verily the lack of riches, nay, even grinding want, is a very little matter when weighed against the worser evil of a bankrupt love.

Alas, poor Stella! I have said that she was poorer than before, because of the wealth which had taken wings—true; but how infinitely poorer in the love which had lost them! For her love had lost its wings, though not its life. You have seen, perhaps, an eagle, whose pinion was shattered by the hunter's ball, seeming in his very helplessness to gain fresh power to live, to fight for life, to cling to his agonized existence. Well, so was it now with Stella. Loving, as she loved, so

purely, so tenderly, so unselfishly, yes, and so entirely, there was for her an exquisite pain in watching the gradual degradation of the soul which she adored. For the shaft had come home at last. Jonathan was falling, had fallen, fallen far, and she knew it. The wing of her love was broken. It could soar no longer in the empyrean of a cloudless confidence, adoring, undisturbed, an object worthy of its soul's best homage. It was on the ground now. Yet living, intensely, restlessly living, and refusing to despair.

'Perhaps, when he has gained the petty prizes he is fighting for,' Stella would sometimes think, 'perhaps then he will see the smallness and the selfishness of such a life, and try to be himself again. Surely the noble nature and the grand ambition cannot be all crushed out. God forbid! for I love him even although they be.'

Yes, she had much to suffer, but she bore it bravely, calmly, trustfully, and in a spirit far above the maudlin cowardice which flies from trial to seclusion; she bore it in the world, cheering, inspiring, consoling all around her, though she herself in very truth was weary and heavyladen. Would you see her as she was? Read between the lines of this letter to Jonathan.

'Though there is much to tell you this week, I have barely time to write. Mrs. Dingley is not at all well. I sat up with her last night, but she has had no sleep until just now—eleven a.m.—and I must take advantage of the occasion to run for an hour to the cottages. Things are better and worse there—better because rain has fallen and the crops promise well, but worse in the meantime. Pat Logan is in prison on suspicion of sheep-stealing and worse—a capital charge, if it can be

proved. I borrowed Dr. Raymond's horse -yours being ill again-and rode over to see the poor fellow. I am afraid I did him very little good in any respect, for poor Pat broke down when he saw me, and begged me so pitifully to take care of his wife and children when he should be gone, that I fairly cried too. The road was longer than I had been told, and very foolishly, between wasting my time crying and talking to Pat about his defence, I left myself no time to get home by daylight. By the time I got to the Moss Corner it was quite dark, and there a man sprang out of the hedge and demanded my money. I had just begun to tell him how sorry I was he should be so wicked, when he said, "Oh, miss, is it you?—I'd as soon rob the blessed saints!" Then he ran away. But I know who it was by the voice, and am going to give him a lecture he won't forget, and make him promise

not to do it again. The people are very miserable just now. Allowances must be made for them. They are driven to crime or must starve. What an awful alternative! There is a great deal of illness, too, resulting from famine. The poor little children look like shadows. Is the government going to do nothing in the matter? Would not making them do something be a better use to which to put your influence and powers than-I do not wish to be unjust, Jonathan' (she could not bring herself to write 'self-aggrandisement')-'than what you are doing with them now? Do please think, as you used to think, of how delightful it would be to save so many poor creatures from such terrible suffering and temptation. I must really stop, though, and go to cheer Pat Logan's wife, or I shall not get back by the time Mrs. Dingley wakens.'

Then read the following (now) charac-

teristic letter from Jonathan received by Stella a few weeks after she had written the above. But no, it is merely the diary of a man about town, nothing higher, and, of course, nothing lower-a diary without a sentence in it which indicates that its author had ever entertained aspirations higher than those of an average billbroker or politician. I cannot bring myself to quote its everlasting Whig dishings and schemes for Whig-dishing, its picquet, duchesses, and general emptiness, that remind me more of the editor of a society paper, than of a man who was truly great and once had been truly noble. Let us forget that aspect of the question—bury it out of sight, as Jonathan did—and consider only the triumph that he won.

CHAPTER XVI.

For Dr. Jonathan Swift was nearing the goal of his later hopes. Ever since he had begun to content himself with the desire and hope of personal supremacy, his ambition had yearned to better the example of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Xime-Men—those petty, crawling reptiles, without honour or reverence, who worshipped only money and success—were unworthy of his services, and he would not try to render any. To raise them from their mean insignificance was impos-Their soullessness was not equal to the effort; but at any rate he could make them bow down and acknowledge him, and he would. He would solace himself with the sensation of supremacy, if only above a crew which he despised. That is another point with reference to the diary which I did not quote in the last chapter. He despised the life he was leading as heartily as he did the people with whom he was leading it. The degradation was diplomatic. He did it with an He stooped to conquer, or he thought he did. Bah! Worse than ever. Yes, he would be supremely great. When they wanted to be killed, these vindictive barbarians, he would direct their hordes for them, and nominate the butcher commanding in chief. When they only wished to call each other names, he would appoint the speaker and bear sway over the members of the polite assembly elected for that purpose. He was a man, true, worse luck, but at any rate he would be the head of the serpent.

Yet all the time he was far, very far, from being as degraded as such sentiments would indicate. Shaken as his faith had been in his fellow-creatures, he knew in his own self-consciousness, but slightly burdened yet with those sins he most despised, that the human was indeed divine. Nevertheless, great he would be, no matter over whom he ruled. Moreover, great he could be, and he knew it. Every day heightened his supremacy, every meeting riveted the yoke of his genius more firmly on those with whom he was thrown in contact.

There were other poets, other satirists, other statesmen, other philosophers, besides himself; but no Englishman living except Bolingbroke was his equal in any two of these departments. So he felt what he could do if opportunity offered, and he laboured to create the opportunity. He knew exactly what he wanted. A

German kinglet obeying the behests of a tumultuous parliament would be no tool for him; but what might not be accomplished by Archbishop Swift dancing a reinstated Stuart on his knee?

Everything seemed to point the self-same way. Oxford was falling, or, more correctly speaking, he was being found out. He had long enjoyed that reputation for being a 'safe man,' which in all ages, and especially in our own, has done so much for cautious stupidity; but that sort of thing does not last for ever. The necessity presently arises for doing something as well as looking oracular, and then, the end of the tether being reached, people begin to understand the scope of this invertebrate intelligence.

The active peace negotiations which St. John and Swift had instituted had at last brought this epoch round to the poor Lord Treasurer. Peace was a necessity, if not

to the country, at least to the party It had to be patched up somehow, or heads would pay the reckoning.

'We must make peace or go to the Tower,' wrote Swift to Lady Masham, and it is to be observed that the pronoun was 'we,' not 'they.' For, by the time that things began to look serious, Jonathan was part and parcel with the ministry, and knew very well that he would not escape the consequences of disaster simply because his counsellings had been unofficial, and his influence unauthorised.

So early as 1711, he devoted all his efforts to bolstering up the negotiations, which resulted presently in the Peace of Utrecht. It was an infamous peace, but I believe the ministry were honest in concluding it. They were misinformed. Besides, they had their necks to save. We at least can well afford to be lenient to their memories who put up with a govern-

ment which at Kilmainham compounded with felony—and why? Nobody was going to touch their necks, and of reputation they had none to lose. And as early, too, as 1711, he found that Oxford was a stumbling-block in the way of everything, no matter what. The very embodiment of idiotic hesitation, he could not, when the time came, even make up his mind to run away.

Jonathan saw Oxford's weakness. St. John saw, and had long seen, Jonathan's strength. The consequence was assured. The two old friends began more and more to work together, and leave their lord and master to hesitate in the background. Oxford was surprised to find every other day that some measure of the utmost importance had been, pending his assent, begun and half finished; and he forthwith began to hesitate as to whether he should do well to be angry.

'The Public Spirit of the Whigs' had placed Jonathan on a pedestal of political fame which more than compensated for his want of noble birth. The aristocratic Tories already considered this ex-secretary to be the first statesman in Europe. But the 'Conduct of the Allies' raised his reputation to a point of unquestioned supremacy. This little book was published in November, 1711, and went through seven editions in two months. It was quoted in the votes, and made use of in the speeches, and may be fairly considered as having carried the peace.

The Earl of Oxford began to awake to a sense of the situation. He was clearly the fifth wheel on the coach. Things could be managed far too well without the assistance of his trembling hesitancy. So he began, moreover, to be jealous. From that moment the Stuarts were lost—and a very good thing too.

Meanwhile, as I say, Jonathan's credit and influence were almost unlimited. The popular belief that he was the ministry's guiding spirit gained strength from the humane protection he so notoriously and efficiently afforded to deserving Whigs of the stamp of Addison, Congreve, and Steele. Every paper in the Examiner worth reading was at once credited to his wit and information. Every 'Grub Street,' from 'The law is a bottomless Pit' upwards, was fondly believed to spring from his fertile pen. He ceased to be Dr. Jonathan Swift and became 'the Doctor.' His high personal character powerfully added to his reputation. A wit, who led the life of a Christian, and who, without cant or obtrusiveness, quietly and consistently did his duty, was so exceedingly rare a specimen that Jonathan was regarded with an admixture of reverence for his principles in the admiration paid to his

genius. Well aware of this, he honestly accepted what he considered to be his due. Besides, it was so potent a factor in his advancement that he could not afford to disclaim its assistance even to himself. Determined to grasp the substance of Empire, every ally was welcomed, cherished, and (though Dr. Swift was never a hypocrite) made the most of—the one I have been mentioning among the number. Thus armed and accourred, Jonathan began to see the goal of his ambition close before him—almost within his grasp. The excitement was intense. The strain tremendous. It is marvellous that, constituted as he was, his physical health did not give way beneath it. Ah! it was a very big fish he was playing. Success meant empire. Failure meant ruin utter, hopeless, irretrievable; and ruin meant—he knew it - 'That.' 'That,' and poor, and disgraced! He felt the straw, the cell was damp

around him; grinning faces were at the bars, inhuman laughings were in his ears, the gyves were on his wrists, the whip upon his back, and then, the perspiration dripping from his brow, he tears himself away from the awful thought and plunges with frantic eagerness into the struggle for success.

One night, in 1712, when things were in this state, Jonathan's man, very much to his master's surprise, announced the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke. He proclaimed the title (which St. John had very recently taken) with so much feeling and self-glorification that Jonathan gave him notice to quit before authorising him to show Lord Bolingbroke upstairs.

'Why have you discharged your man, Jonathan?' asked the new peer, who had heard the mandate, 'You leave my service this day month.'

'Because the fellow is a vulgar fool,'

answered Swift, 'and thought you had become my superior by taking a couple of titles.'

I tell this little story as one peculiarly illustrative at once of Jonathan's natural haughtiness and of the position he actually occupied at this time amongst the most powerful and esteemed of his contemporaries.

'Nonsense, you must take the fellow back. Don't starve him out of pique,' laughed Bolingbroke, 'and now, then, are we alone?'

'Yes, and, for heaven's sake, don't be mysterious. What are you here for within an hour of my having left your own house?'

'My head is much too good a one to be wasted on a scaffold, Jonathan, so, with submission, I will first shut the door. Now, then, what did you think of the Lord-Treasurer's appearance to-night? What

sort of a figure did he cut? Eh, Friend Jonathan?'

'Of course the fellow is a fool,' answered Swift. 'He cut his own figure, his own historic figure, tore it rather, to confuse the metaphor, tore it into shreds. But do you suppose I am as great a fool as he, and am going to believe that you hunt me up at two in the morning merely to take my opinion on so trifling a subject?'

'Gently, Jonathan, gently, the subject is far indeed from being trifling. A thousand mischiefs on it, such a subject makes one feel inclined to make a speech. Never mind, I won't. I mean to do something, and, therefore, can afford to repress the exuberance of my verbosity.'

'Oh! You are going to do something, are you?' remarked Jonathan, with more sneer than surprise in his tone. 'And what is the very newest enterprise which

you are going to make and your illustrious colleague to mar?'

Bolingbroke walked across the room and put his hand on his friend's shoulder.

'I am going,' he said, 'to upset the Guelph coach. I am going to enthrone James Stuart. I am going to abolish the whig puppet and crush the showmen. I am, I will, and I can—if you will help me as you can and ought.'

'And I,' said Jonathan, 'I am not going to touch any scheme whatever with the end of a pole if it is burdened with the assistance of the brilliant and acute Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford.'

'Nor would I.'

'Good; and how do you propose to set about it? It is lucky you mentioned the matter to me, as I intended to do the same thing myself or perish in the attempt. And our two schemes might have clashed.'

Bolingbroke looked curiously at the

gaunt clergyman who spoke thus of dethroning and making kings, and whom he remembered so well as the despised secretary of an inferior politician.

'You are right,' he said, 'you could have made a party more easily than I. I cannot do without you, though possibly you might have done without me. When we have conquered, I am quite ready to serve under you. You can become Lord-Treasurer and I will remain as I am.'

'There will be plenty of time for dividing the spoils after we have won them,' answered Jonathan. 'We need not bother about that now;'—but his heart beat high at this acknowledgment of his supremacy—'What is your scheme?'

'Carefully managed we can succeed without war,' replied Bolingbroke, 'and that is the great object. Peaceful victory is abiding—'

'Whereas,' interrupted Swift, 'in war

the Peace of Utrecht sometimes succeeds the battle of Malplaquet.

'You have hit it, Jonathan; and the best way to win is to gain all the combatants. My notion is to promote largely colonial acquisitions. Whig officers would be invaluable to report upon the south coast of Africa, Newfoundland fisheries, or Ceylon emeralds.'

'Which would cause a certain dispersion in Israel.'

'Yes. It would have to be kept up till the time came—a time not remote, I fear—when the Queen will leave us. Every post of military value must be in the hands of our people. There must be no more childish reliance on a few Highlanders and wild Irishmen. Besides, we cannot afford to be ruined any longer by Popish alliances. The sooner the craze is forgotten the better.'

'True,' said Swift, 'the first public act

of James IV. must be to declare war against France.'

'You are right—but ——'

'Not a "but," Bolingbroke, or we are lost.'

'No, no, I agree with you; that was not my "but." I was about to refer to the initiative. These things are generally loaded very accurately and miss fire after all, thanks to the flint in the lock or the powder in the pan. Having secured the army, the executive nobility, and the House of Commons, how about the start? We can get power enough if we can set it going.'

'We must consider that,' said Jonathan, 'but one thing is certain. The king must not be the flint. All the work must be done for him. We do not wish to play Clarendon to a new Charles. Go home now. We understand each other. Tomorrow we can discuss quietly about the

initiative, and, above all, how to be quit of your lord and master. He is my difficulty, and he it is who will ruin us if we are to be ruined. One can provide against the logical efforts of intelligence, but not against the fortuitous kick of an ass:'

'One can lock the stable door,' said Bolingbroke; but Jonathan shook his head.

Jonathan lay awake that night. The time for a supreme effort had come. Ambition claimed him body and soul for her own. There was no longer a thought of others' welfare in his calculations and schemes. The dark figure was looming larger and more kingly, but also blacker than ever.

CHAPTER XVII.

Jonathan's 'Brotherhood' was a great expense to him. I forget whether I have or have not reminded you of the existence of that celebrated society. It deserves mention as the best managed 'head centre' the world has yet seen. There were sixteen brothers, and oddly enough mixed they were at first sight. Such men as Oxford and Bolingbroke, the Dukes of Ormond and Beaufort, Lords Masham, Anglesey, Lansdowne, Orrery, and Sir William Windham, were far from being all on the same political platform.

That was precisely what Swift had de-

therhood. The presence of moderate men in the society dissipated all suspicion as to the remaining brothers, and the motives for their frequent convivial meetings. When I first found that a Jacobite plot had been matured by Swift and Bolingbroke among about eight of these men, and without the other eight having the least idea of the proceedings conducted under their very noses, I confess the audacity of the scheme startled me almost as much as the ability with which it had been managed.

Without anticipating, however, what I shall presently have to say about this, the reader will readily understand that club dinners once a week with such men and under such peculiar circumstances, and the life generally, of which this was a piece, cost far more money than Jonathan could afford. The government, it is true,

were lavishly generous in their payments to him. Oxford, trembling lest he should lose the doctor's allegiance, showered down pounds sterling from the national coffers; Bolingbroke handed over many a slice of secret service money; and Her most gracious Majesty Queen Anne sent frequent presents to the comfortable doctor, who spoke so sweetly about the love she ought to bear her exiled brother. All was not enough—not nearly enough. The national resources could not be too glaringly trespassed upon without explanation, and, as I say, the expenses, direct and incidental, of the life Jonathan was leading were very considerable indeed. Under these circumstances, his old friend Stratford was Jonathan's stand-by. From him he borrowed frequently and largely, sums 'to be repaid at the borrower's convenience.'

The position of affairs had become so critical that this course was the only alternative to bankruptcy, and bankruptcy meant the ruin of all his rapidly maturing plans and magnificent and near ambition. Jonathan had progressed far beyond the stage at which he would have allowed anything from God to Devil to interfere with that. So Stratford lent his friend money, and in return had the benefit of that friend's conversation, in which there was generally some indication of the course public affairs would probably take during the next week or two, with an implicit reference, of course, to the Funds. There was no vulgar breach of faith about the matter. Jonathan did not admit to himself that he was betraying State secrets; but he did. For my part, I am not disposed to absolve from blame a man 'who haggles and hair-splits his conscience out of working order, any more than I am one who drinks himself into the same immoral condition. There is an atmosphere of 'vaticanism' about the sin which is more repulsive to me than is good straight-forward, pig-headed crime.

However, by some such arguments, more implicit than expressed, as are generally made use of in such cases, Jonathan managed to reap the benefit of-call it what you like; while still in his own eyes preserving his integrity unimpaired. It is just as well to remember this. The key to much of his conduct lies in this hallucination of continued high-souledness and purity. One of the fallacies with which, in this connection, he half unconsciously soothed his conscience, was that the secrets he hinted at to Stratford went no further. If he could do an old friend a kindness without damaging the State, it was surely a very good thing.

At least one other person, however, knew everything that Stratford gleaned from Jonathan's information, and that person was Mrs. Stratford. A true wife, nothing which concerned her husband was without interest to her. She entered with zest into all his schemes for increasing his wealth and improving his position, and, in so far as she could, curbed his restless spirit of speculation. Lately she had been terribly anxious about her husband's He had ceased to be as entirely communicative to her as was his wont, and seemed to have some great enterprise in train which he was afraid to reveal even to his wife. His sleep was broken, he became pale and haggard; alternating between excited hilarity and gloomy moodiness, he appeared so changed from his former quiet yet happy self that Mrs. Stratford began to entertain the gravest fears.

One day, feeling she could bear it no longer, she ordered her coach, and proceeded to call upon 'the doctor,' than

whom she knew no better adviser; and, besides, there was a strong suspicion in her heart that he was in some way or other at the root of her poor husband's trouble. Before I recount the interview which followed, let me, as I hate mysteries, explain what this trouble was.

The gradually failing health of the queen made the question of the succession one of imminent consequence; and, ever since Jonathan's arrangement with Bolingbroke, the inception of which I mentioned in the last chapter, had been finally concluded, no stone had been left unturned by either of them, nor any means unemployed, which could aid the success of their design. The ramifications of a great conspiracy by this time (1713) reached throughout the country and society. It stretched from Lands End to Caithness, and from Connemara to Flamborough Head. It embraced peer and peasant, and, strangest of all, it sat upon the throne. Happy country, where individual liberty was so strong that the sovereign could only conspire, not command, that her brother, the rightful heir, should succeed her.

Yet, widespread as was the plot, no soul was in the inner secret except the two master spirits. Therefore, without knowing why, a vague feeling of uneasiness pervaded men's minds. Something was felt to be hovering unseen in the air around; the atmosphere was heavy and oppressive, though the sky was clear. This feeling of discomfort and distrust showed itself most clearly in the financial world. The funds fell steadily, day after day, and week after week. Nobody knew why; but fall they did.

Stratford, however, felt none of this uneasiness. Was he not behind the scenes? Had he not unfailing, infallible authority for his political beliefs and prog-

nostications? No national complication or disaster could take him nearly as much by surprise as it would certainly take everybody else. His information guarded him against all contingencies, save such as were universally unforeseen. Therefore, when the funds began to droop, Stratford, having heard from Jonathan no reason why they should do so, bought largely. They fell further; he bought again-again and again. For months he continued to persist, confident in the correctness of his deductions from Jonathan's silence. By degrees, losing his feet, he began to plunge heavily, as a man in crushing difficulties is very apt to do. Worse and worse! The funds kept fall, fall, falling.

Jonathan saw his friend going swiftly down the road to ruin, and did not dare stop him. Had he said, 'This public sentiment is correct, though logically baseless—there is cause for fear,' the question

would have come, 'Why?' That question he dare not answer—he dare not answer. He dare not have the answer to it suspected. All might be ruined by one indiscretion. No, his friend and benefactor must fall rather than that. He might easily be compensated in the time that was coming.

So matters stood when Mrs. Stratford, carried away by fears for her husband, came to visit Jonathan, and beg his advice and assistance. The poor lady began bravely enough to explain what was the matter, and why she took the liberty of troubling Dr. Swift, who must be so deeply engaged; but the recital of the change in her husband was soon too much for her calm, and she burst into tears.

Jonathan was heartily sorry.

'Come, come, you must not cry,' he said, kindly; 'this cannot be a very serious matter, after all—probably only some

speculative losses, which your husband can very well afford to bear. It may do him good to burn his fingers a little. Of course, I do not know the whole of his concerns, by any means, but there cannot surely be anything to justify his terrifying you thus.'

'No, Dr. Swift,' she answered, with sad persuasion, 'it is something much worse than that. If the trouble is a money one, it is absolute ruin we are face to face with. He has been unfortunate before, but never took it so keenly to heart as now. He always said that, so long as there was enough left to keep me and the children from want, he cared nothing about the rest. It may be money,' she continued, half musing; 'he has told me nothing about that for so long that I don't know. God help my poor husband if we are coming to ruin! He could not bear to see me suffering, and the children too; it

would kill him. Oh, Dr. Swift, can't you do something?'

'There is nothing in my power to do which I will leave undone,' said Jonathan; 'but what can I do? So far, we have only guessed at the disease we have to cure.'

'Then come with me, Dr. Swift, come with me now and see him. He may speak to you about it all, as he will not to me. He was at home when I left, sitting still and looking as though he did not see—as he sometimes will for hours together. Dr. Swift,' she whispered, 'I fear he may go mad.' (Jonathan started and felt chilly.) 'Come with me now. By God's help you may save him.'

So Jonathan went. Stratford was sitting as his wife had left him two hours before. On her knees beside his chair was his little five-yeared girl, trying to wind his impassive fingers among her

golden hair and make them take the rippling curlets prisoners, as they were wont so gladly to do, and the great blue eyes were turned wistfully to her father's face, as in wonder that his love was silent. Mrs. Stratford glanced from the scene to Jonathan, and then, mastering her emotion, hurriedly crossed the room and roused her husband.

'Dr. Swift is here,' she said.

Stratford recovered himself instantly. He seized Jonathan's hand and held it.

'Swift,' he said, without preface—'Swift, my old friend, I am on the brink of ruin. There is something behind all this, or there is not. This is the last time—I recover myself or am lost, hopelessly lost. She is lost' (pointing to his wife), 'and she, my pretty little one'—he picked her up and kissed her passionately. 'They must starve, and I must go to jail and rot, rot, rot away by inches, not even working

with my hands for them. Save me, Swift! Tell me'—he dropped on his knees in the excess of his emotion—'what does it mean? If this ruinons fall has no real foundation in something to be feared, things will get better, and I can buy more and save myself. If otherwise, tell me that I may sell, and keep starvation from my loved ones. There can only be one thing, and you must know it. Do you fear a civil war? Is the queen working for her brother?'

'No,' said Dr. Jonathan Swift. He dared not say 'yes.'

Stratford kissed his wife and little daughter with quiet intenseness.

'We are saved, my darlings, we are saved!' he said; and then, forgetting all else in the excitement of the moment, he at once left the room to go into the City, and again buy largely in the funds.

CHAPTER XVIII.

JONATHAN stood a moment stunned and paralysed by the deed he had done and dared not undo. He knew that within a week the Pretender was to be brought to England, and Argyle and the Whig magnates put under arrest. He knew, too, what the effect of that would be on the funds. He had sent his friend to ruin, perhaps to madness—poverty and madness! He knew what they were, and his mouth had condemned his friend and benefactor to that place at the bidding of ambition. His knees shook under him.

'Good heavens! am I become so vile a

beast?' he thought in anguish. 'Can I, too, tell a base interested lie, and prosper on the ruin of a friend?'

But the glory of his ambition surged in upon his mind and lightened the shadow of his crime. He braced himself to forget all but the splendid future which the truth might have blasted. Stratford must take his chance. The glorious prize was so nearly grasped! Another week, another month at most, it would be his! Have it he must though perdition were the consequence. A child's voice roused him. It was the fair-haired little one.

'Please, Dr. Swift, mamma says she is very, very much obliged. She will tell you so another time. Why is mamma crying, Dr. Swift?'

Jonathan strode to the table, poured some brandy into a glass and swallowed it at a gulp. Then he left the room without facing the child again. He was afraid.

There was to be a great party that evening given by Mrs. Vanhomrich, and Jonathan, of course, was going. It was one of the wild extravagancies for which she was famous, and rumour had it this was to be the wildest of the many. London had long been agape about it, and the more so because nobody quite knew why. Anne had declared that anyone invading the sacred precincts before the appointed time would be accounted her mortal enemy; so society remained in ignorance. A few rash spirits had tried to pump Dr. Swift, who, of course, was in the secret, but they retired no wiser than they came.

Expectation was on tiptoe when one day a hint, which made mystery more mysterious, came to the invited guests in the shape of a supplementary invitation, or command, rather, to make themselves as like tropical savages of various races and lands as their reading and imagination would permit. Evidently a new carnival, with all its tasteful riot, was abroad. Of this Jonathan bethought himself when he reached home, and, thanking heaven for the distraction the scene would afford him, he gladly prepared to join the revellers, and forget in polite orgies the thoughts which haunted his soul.

Mrs. Vanhomrich had created a site worthy of her endeavours and Anne's imagination. A spacious park had been entirely transformed, and made to represent a mixture of Ceylon, Central Africa, and Fairyland. An Amazon, which had once been the river Thames, rolled along its boundary line, and bore on its bosom canoes of every pattern, managed by strange watermen of shaggy aspect, and armed with bows and arrows. From out the recesses of a jungle, dense as its original, which flanked on one side

the mystic garden, came the roar of the tiger and the hyena's laugh.

'Chained, you know,' said Jack, in a spirit which reminded the company of 'gentle as any sucking-dove.'

Tropical plants and flowers were scattered with lavish profuseness everywhere, and facing the jungle was a cleverly arranged vista, through which a glimpse of the distant prairie, with its feeding herds and hunters, could be dimly seen. A central space of about five acres was the camping-ground. Huts, kraals, wigwams of every known type and pattern were clustered about in picturesque confusion, and the whole scene was enlivened by the chatter of monkeys and the cry of parrots which lived in the village palms. weird glare of a thousand torches added its illusion to the fairy vision and made all complete. As to the guests, they were every variety of savage, except this uniformity that all the men represented savage kings and all the women empresses. A great assortment of more or less savage and tropical characters were patronised, but all in direct ratio to their eminence. There were a tribe of great Moguls, a family of Grand Lamas of Thibet, several Incas of Peru, two or three Maharajahs, and one grovelling Red Indian, with no higher title than that of medicine man, which he had erroneously understood to make him rank with the Pope. So constituted and in such a place the fun could hardly fail to be hearty and the enjoyment great.

Jonathan arrived rather late and kept for some time in the background watching the odd contrast of these dignitaries' clothes and manners. It was satisfactory to him in the state of mind he was then in, to observe how universal was that am-

bition which was ruining himself. He was only more greatly ambitious than this motley herd. That was all the difference. No reflection could soothe him, however, or take the moody bitterness from his heart, and more especially no reflection of that sort. It would have been a new experience for Jonathan Swift to have consciously solaced his mind by considering he was no worse than these Yahoos.

The air was soft and balmy. Nature had leagued with art to render perfect the voluptuous grace which rested on all around.

'Those people are dancing much too well,' said Jonathan to himself. 'Their souls, such as they are, are in their work. These novel surroundings and appearance are too much for them. The superfices, or whole man, is altered, and they are in a state of great excitement. Dear me, if

they don't believe in the resurrection of the body they can't believe in everlasting life.'

Then he added, noticing an angry look pass across the brow of a noble lord and make him appear very much in character with his cannibal island costume,

'To-night will not pass over without somebody going on the war-trail and demonstrating how unnecessary it is for him to dress up as a savage.'

His meditations were interrupted by Jack Vanhomrich, who was one of a number who more or less accurately represented the Shah of Persia.

'So here you are at last,' shouted Jack.
'Everybody's been looking for you everywhere. You will disappoint them. The idea was you would dress as something nobody else thought of, and here you are, when you do come, not dressed at all.'

'Pardon me, Jack, I have come in the

character of missionary to these benighted heathens.'

There was a merry laugh from a little group which had assembled round them; but Jonathan started when a Kalmuck Tartar sneered with very civilized venom.

'Rather an easy way of reaching the summit of your "glorious ambition," isn't it, doctor? I heard something about that when I was in Ireland recently.'

That Kalmuck Tartar, alias Sir Dickon, had struck Jonathan a harder blow than he ever had felt before. Nothing more was said just then, but Jonathan resented that cruel cut as one only resents the deserved. He waited his opportunity.

'Why didn't you snub him?' asked Jack, when they were again alone.

'He is a justice of the peace, and I couldn't insult "his honour," answered Jonathan, using the rather Irish title with just enough emphasis.

Jack went away laughing, and told the tale to a dear friend, who told it within earshot of Sir Dickon. Matters were not thereby mended. Sir Dickon thereupon made some remarks about the Reverend Dr. Swift, which were repeated, as he expected they would be, for Jonathan's delectation.

Some time later Jack came to Jonathan. He was boiling with rage and was keeping it under control, which in the case of a man of his frank, open-hearted temperament is a very bad sign indeed.

'Sir Dickon is still talking to Anne,' he said; 'I hate that man, and you never can be sure about girls. If he goes on worshipping long enough one cannot lay odds but what she will take the creeping little idiot sooner or later. She stays, stays, and the more I tried to entice her away the more she stayed. Do come, as you

love me; when you insist, she does as she is bid.'

So Jonathan went—'as he loved him'—simply 'as he loved him.' His mind was full of other things. In spite of the bitter blow he had so recently received, he was thinking much more of Stratford, and infinitely more of himself, than he was of Sir Dickon or of Anne. Therefore, when they reached this hero who was engaged in as amatory a discourse with Anne as her redoubtable disposition permitted of, the doctor's mind was so deeply involved in considerations of state policy that the encounter fairly took him by surprise.

'Ten to one I know what you are thinking about,' remarked the baronet.

'Do you mean you know one tenth of what Dr. Swift thinks?' interposed Anne, with exemplary promptitude.

'No,' answered Swift; 'Sir Dickon

means what he says, and I believe him. Thought reading is a wonderful thing. Why he, Sir Dickon, was playing on the flute, and Lord Lechmere—without anybody telling him—knew what was meant to be the tune. There! Could there be less expression of an innate idea?

This was enough for the 'little lower than the peerage,' especially when coupled with the mocking laugh of his adored.

'Your knowledge of the flute and your knowledge of manners are on a par,' he remarked, with venomous politeness of tone, if not of speech, 'and therefore it may interest you to learn that I have played with the utmost acceptance before the highest, the very highest society. Musically, I mean, of course. My position justifies me in being perfectly careless as to social distinctions.'

'Happy man!' said Jonathan. 'And yet some philosophers have maintained

that all distinctions worth mentioning were merely social. Such, for instance, as Virtue and Vice, Truth and Falsehood, and especially Honour and its opposite.'

'Do I understand you, Dr. Swift, to make an imputation on my honour?'

'Heaven forbid!' answered Jonathan.
'I call the world to witness that, in my humble opinion, there is no room for an imputation on the gentleman's honour.'

The words were not sufficiently accentuated to cross the border line between disclaimer and insult; but Sir Dickon was all the angrier for that, and the satisfied laugh with which Anne greeted the observation fairly maddened him. He forgot himself.

'I shall not bandy words,' he said, 'but, the next time you say I have the manners of a dog, I shall——'

Jonathan interrupted him.

'Pardon me, Sir Dickon, I did not say

you had the manners of a dog. It is impossible I should have said so, because I am strongly of opinion that you have not.'

Before Sir Dickon could sufficiently recover himself to reply, Anne had asked Jonathan to convoy her to some point of interest, and the pair had bowed and departed. Jack remained, however; for, his mission fulfilled, he wished to solace the feelings of his vanquished guest. While he was wondering how to begin this kindly task, Sir Dickon, boiling with fury, turned his thoughts into an altogether different channel by remarking,

- 'I wonder your sister likes to advertise her shameless love for a married man.'
- 'What?' ejaculated Jack, doubting the evidence of his senses.
- 'Her shameless love for a married man,' repeated Sir Dickon, very clearly, slowly, and distinctly.
 - 'Who is the married man?' asked Jack,

speaking with equal clearness and in a manner which there was no mistaking.

'Dr. Jonathan Swift.'

When that question was asked and that answer given, Jonathan was within a very few yards of the speakers. He had hurried back to find the Amazonian bow and arrows which Anne Vanhomrich had forgotten in the excitement of the late encounter. Only a few bushes were between him and Jack. He stopped, rooted to the ground. The entire situation flashed across him in an instant. Sir Dickon had recently been in Ireland, and had heard more rumours than of Jonathan's missionary ambition. What should he do? To interfere meant an explanation, and not to interfere meant blood. He knew it: he felt it. There was a painfully long pause, and Jonathan had time to think before the next word was spoken.

'You are my guest, but Dr. Swift has made my sister love him; he will some day be my brother. Now be careful, repeat your slander if you dare.'

'Dr. Jonathan Swift is a married man.'

Should Jonathan dash forward and interrupt the answer he knew was coming? Who would believe his explanation? All London would jeer. Ridicule would overwhelm him. Half his prestige and influence would be swallowed up just at this infinitely critical moment, when everything depended on the dual power of Bolingbroke and himself. No, he dare not, dare not interfere. And as these thoughts, swift as evil, possessed his soul, he heard Jack's reply.

'You are a liar!'

To that there was only one answer possible. It would come presently. Meanwhile, the two men parted.

'Good night, Mr. Vanhomrich.'

'Good night, Sir Richard.'

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE was work to do that night. Indeed, Jonathan had appeared at the ball mainly to prevent people wondering what the exceedingly important business could be which kept him away. It was work which must be done. The train was to be fired, and it was dangerous to leave the ready materials a moment unemployed. So Jonathan, forcing himself to be calm, gave a few minutes, 'impartial' (as he afterwards bitterly remembered he at the time had thought it) consideration to the case generally, and then decided he would get the national business settled first with Bolingbroke, and then arrange some scheme for saving the life of that friend who had with such generous gallantry rescued *his* from a watery grave.

He nerved himself, and tightened his muscles, as though to hold his resolution fast, and walked rapidly towards the least public exit from the grounds. A few steps—he paused. It was too terrible. Where would he be but for this gallant, loveable young man's noble unselfishness? Dead, drowned; his ambition beneath the waves; his pride the spoil of the salt spray; his hopes the forgotten offering on the wild storm's altar. Dare he put anything before his duty to such a friend? And such a duty, too! Why, this man who had saved his life was once more going to risk his own, and this time in defence of his friend's honour. So frankly, unsuspectingly certain of the high-minded faith of his sister's 'lover.' Jonathan reeled under the thought.

'He has made her love him. He will some day be my brother!'

Never! That could never be. Good God! what had he done? Had he really, for the paltry credit he could gain, ruined the happiness of this young life? Did she really love him? And was her brother to face death in defence of that man's 'honour' who had done this wrong? But the thought flashed across him, too, that for this very reason he dare not interfere. There would be more than laughter over Sir Dickon's Irish slanders: there would be bitter scorn of this high-minded clergyman, this essence of unsullied purity and correctness, who treated thus the sister of such a friend. Bah! it was maddening. He felt the blood dancing in his head, and steadied himself with an effort. These Yahoos exulting over him! Well, at any rate, he would rule over them. He would be greater, if he could not be better, than they.

'Yes, I will, the Devil helping me,' he muttered, and strode away.

Oh, mighty ambition, noblest, grandest of human virtues! What fiend is he who borrows so often thy majestic seeming, and sits in lying state upon an unholy image of thy throne, luring so many of mankind's archangels downwards to doom and desolation? Alas! alas! that thine own heavenly brightness should all too frequently grow dim and dimmer still when boyhood puts on the heavy mantle of years, and aspirations are brought face to face with trial; for then the tinsel glory of the lie which mimics thee looms out from thine eclipse, and at that shrine the sublimest of mankind have kneeled, on that altar have been sacrificed.

When Jonathan reached home, he found Bolingbroke waiting for him.

'How late you are!' began the minister; but the traces of the recent struggle were so plain in Jonathan's drawn features and burning eyes, that he added, abruptly, 'How? What's the matter? Discovery?'

'Nothing,' answered Jonathan. 'I am ill; but that is nothing. Let us go to business.'

'It was absurd to surmise discovery,' remarked Bolingbroke. 'This little revolution of ours is the only one on record which cannot be discovered, simply because we have it all to ourselves until the time comes. That was a superb idea of yours, friend Jonathan—that brotherhood and its offshoots. While waiting for the late Dr. Swift, I counted up for my individual satisfaction how many among the high nobility we can rely on as confederates, although they know nothing about any overt action we are going to take, and still less as to anything they are expected to do. The arrangement of matters has been superb-so far-almost too good.

The enemy is scattered and helpless; the army is carefully officered, and it will do as it is bid; our nobles are at their posts quite ready, though they don't know it, to raise their districts. Friend Jonathan, again I say we have managed this matter with considerable credit.'

'That depends on the outcome of it all,' answered Jonathan. 'The end must justify us. Most fruits that spoil, spoil in the ripening.'

'True, doctor; but we have only to eat ours now. I have found the man we wanted—as trusty a man as he is big a villain. He has more than one rope round his neck, which he knows I can tighten at a moment's notice, and for that, and financial reasons, he will go to the king, the devil, or anyone else he may be sent to interview, with equal carelessness.'

'Are you sure you can trust him? Remember how much depends on his fidelity. His is the only doubtful element in the whole of our scheme.'

'Absolutely,' answered Bolingbroke.

'So be it, then,' said Jonathan; and they forthwith, like men of business, dismissed that matter from their minds, and began to go carefully into the details of the imminent Stuart restoration.

It was dawn when the conference ended. Jonathan had forgotten everything else in the fascination of conspiracy, and the prospects success disclosed. Bolingbroke walked to the window.

'A fine morning,' he said. 'The queen will not see many more such. The poor lady's days are numbered. It will be a satisfaction to her, when the end comes, to consider that she has contributed so largely to reinstate in their possessions her kith and kin. Ah! here is my doubledyed, but very useful villain. I judged the time this meeting of ours would con-

sume very correctly. I shall be off. He had better not see me here at this hour. He will come up without wakening the porter; the door is ajar. Be civil to him, Jonathan, in spite of your respective characters, and take care his orders are definite as to the date of sailing—if the winds are contrary, the king must get in a boat and row.'

So saying, Bolingbroke left the room, and a few minutes later a knock at the chamber door told the arrival of his emissary. He entered, and Jonathan saw a tall Scotchman with red-grey hair, whiskers, beard, and moustache. Though not untidy nor what could fairly be called peculiar-looking, there was enough of these appendages to leave but little of his face visible. He closed the door behind him and faced Jonathan in the light of the grey dawn. What was it made him start? Jonathan was standing there pale

as a ghost, and struggling for an utterance which would not come.

'You—alive—still!' he gasped at length.
'They told me you had killed yourself in prison.'

'Your eyes are sharp, Dr. Swift,' answered the man. 'You are the first person who has the least idea that I did not die in prison. No, no; a trifling wound to Mr. Harley was not enough to justify me in going to a better world. What is the matter, doctor?' he continued, with easy jauntiness; 'your own personal love to Lord Oxford is not supposed to be great.'

The tone brought Jonathan to himself again.

'Henri de Guiscard, have you forgotten me?'

'Your fame is universal, world-wide, Dr. Swift; but what do you mean by "forgotten?" This is the first time I have had the honour and privilege of meeting you personally.'

'Villain, murderer, you lie! I am Lauriel's brother.'

'You! Impossible! Yet no, I recognize you now. Dr. Swift, I am glad of this meeting. It has long been my desire to express to you my sorrow for the small, the very small, share I had in that unfortunate occurrence. I was younger then and decently handsome-pest on this dye,-and your sister took a fancy to me which I never encouraged in the least. Then, when Mr. Prior most foolishly meddled and told her abruptly I could never marry, being a priest, she broke her heart. Nothing ever grieved me so much, I assure you. Let me make amends by carrying out your commission, whatever it be or however dangerous, to your entire satisfaction.'

Jonathan thought before he answered.

'The fellow is right. Furthering the ambition is the return, the compensation I

am giving to Jack for my life, for his sister's happiness—for her life, perhaps. Furthering my ambition is the compensation I am giving Stratford for probably ruining him and his wife and little ones. The fellow is honester than I. He does offer something to me of the same coin which, when I am on his side of the hedge, I generally keep for myself.'

Then he said, in a tone which had in it so ugly a tinge of mocking laughter as to startle even the hardened sinner before him,

'We must not be hard upon each other, must we, count? "There is none that doeth good, no, not one."'

Then changing his tone to one of strict business, he gave rapidly the instructions required, insisting carefully on each point of importance with as much clearness and precision as though no sea were heaving in his heart nor tempest raging in his brain. Within a few minutes everything was arranged, and De Guiscard withdrew. 'Wise of the doctor to master his passion,' he thought. 'I am the best agent he can have, so entirely in his power. It would not have been worth his while to discover me for the sake of such a byegone. I wonder if it is worldly wisdom or Christian charity? His voice did not sound over-charitable.'

Suddenly a thought occurred to him.

'I have been told nothing very compromising at first sight, whatever may underlie it all. He was alone in that room. Was he afraid to drive me to despair? Is this all a ruse? Shall I be tracked and taken?'

Considering which contingency, Henri De Guiscard decided to abandon the French expedition and silently started for Harwich in the hopes of reaching Holland and thence Germany in safety, leaving his employers to fruitlessly expect the answer he was to bring.

When this murderer of his sister and mother, this destroyer who had almost made him hate their memory, this black line which had woven in with his own being too and killed the diviner part of it -when this man, whom, in spite of all, he had been content to use as an instrument of his ambition, had departed, Jonathan's thoughts recurred to the approaching duel. He thought it all over again. No, it was impossible for him to give an explanation. Very probably many lives would before long be staked on that same issue, the exigencies of which forced him to allow poor Jack to take his chance. Well, it was only one life more, and risked, though more indirectly, yet none the less truly, on the greatest political and moral question of the age. It could not be helped; it was a national, not a personal question. (Bah! it reminds one of the Transvaal Convention.) But he would take all safe precautions for a happy result.

So Jonathan summoned his man, and sent him there and then to watch the Vanhomrich's door, giving him strict instructions to follow Mr. Jack if he went out, and, in case he noticed anything peculiar, to warn the watch. Then he settled down to work, but in vain. His troubled soul and shattered nerves would not obey his bidding. The ghosts of the past were around him, and the ghost of his own dead self was foremost among the sadly solemn band. He seemed to be back again amidst those far-off scenes, living the old life, thinking the old thoughts, and cherishing -heaven be thanked for it!-the old ambition. Was it this that touched his heart and stirred him soul and spirit to the inmost recesses of his nature, or was there something more subtle, more divine than memory at work? Were Lauriel and a little boy at the foot of the great White Throne?

* * * * * *

CHAPTER XX.

ANOTHER morning dawns pale and misty, like the last. Jonathan Swift rouses himself heavily, and dimly tries to think. A noise outside his window attracts his attention. He listens with an air of puzzled anxiousness, and then, rising from his bed, walks rapidly to and fro.

'Firing already! What can it mean? Surely Bolingbroke has not raised the country before the answer comes. We are lost without the king's presence to help us. The queen—ah, let me see—the queen—no, she is not dead; it is a lie. Oxford is lying if he says so. She cannot

be dead, must not be dead; we are not ready. Ah, yes, she is dead. Let me see, where is the letter that she wrote to me? It is dark. I cannot see. A plague on this Irish climate! Where is my letter? Why should they take away my letter?

He rang the bell violently. An elderly woman enters the room and looks pitifully at the terrible face twitching with passion.

'Come now,' she says, soothingly, 'you won't be angry with poor Martha.'

'Angry!—am I angry? Yes, yes, it is right. I forgot. I hate you all! There is no difference—your saints and your sinners. Bah! how I hate you! Sir William Temple—Stella—where is my letter, woman? Give me my letter!'

'How stupid of me! I have left it in my other pocket. Never mind, doctor; I will fetch it. There, there, only one minute. And, while I am gone, get dressed. Don't you hear the fireworks?'

'Fireworks!-what for?'

There is a tear in the old housekeeper's eye as she answers,

'It is your birthday to-day; the people have come to wish their dean happiness.'

'Tell them to go away. It is all nonsense. My letter—why did you take my letter?'

'You were angry last night and wished to burn it, and I knew this morning you would be sorry. Never mind, I will go for it now.'

Martha looks carefully round the room before leaving it; then, closing the door, she waits a moment, partly to listen, and partly to wipe her eyes, before reporting the result of her visit to the deputation who are below with a birthday greeting.

'Well, Martha, how is the dean?' asks a worthy individual, when at length she is in their presence. 'He can see us, I hope? We have got up early on purpose, though certainly the author of the "Drapiers Letters" well deserves our trouble.

Martha shakes her head.

'He is worse this morning. His eye pains him very much. He is beside himself with pain. But, if you send up your letter, he will answer it. He is very sorry not to see you.'

She would not tell the whole truth, worthy soul. Her old master's reputation was sacred in her eyes.

So the deputation reluctantly submitted to waste their carefully-prepared speeches, and to miss the delight of demonstrating to the witty dean that they, too, were men of genius, and sent up their address as it was.

Martha returns with it to the doctor's room. He is still sitting in his dressing-gown, quiet now, and apparently thought-less.

'The people have brought this birthday

greeting,' she says. 'Will you try to answer it?'

'Yes, yes, I must be civil. I am paid to do my work. What do they say? Read it to me. It is dark. Stay,' he continues, 'give me a pen and ink. I know what they will say. They are all alike.' The touch of the pen seems to awaken him. 'I am better this morning, Martha; a good walk will do me good.'

And, while he writes, poor Martha sadly thinks how long it is since the last walk was taken, and how little chance is left of another ever again.

Suddenly he starts from his seat.

'There, take it—take it—quickly, I am forgetting. I shall write nonsense. Oh, God! my head! my head!' Then he adds, humbly, 'Read it, Martha. Is it right? Is it in my own style? I am not quiet myself to-day, Martha.'

'It is very nice, I am sure, doctor; quite as good as the "letters."

'Ah! yes, my letter; where is my letter, woman?'

'It is very dark, doctor. Won't you wait till Io an read it to you? I shall not be long.'

'Go, go,' he answers, bitterly. 'I must do as I am bid.'

Then the merciful gloom closes round him again, and he lives in the far, tumultuous past.

'Don't attempt it. Don't attempt it. I warn you it is useless. Harley was a Whig; so were you; but Oxford is one still. You cannot tide over this disaster by a compromise. He would ruin himself to ruin us. Let him know nothing. Not a hint. Well, never mind, if you will try, so must I. Ha! who said so? Nobody knows. Nobody can know. They lied who told you. My influence with the

queen is as it was. Jack killed him. Jack—let me see. Ah! poor Jack—poor Jack. Help, help! Jack, I drown—I drown! Where are you? Are you dead? Did you die, too? The wound is only a trifle. A little care is all you need. Care, yes, I promised. They told me today was his birthday. I must put flowers on his grave to-day. Stella is fond of flowers. Where does she get them, so many? No, no, she is as pure as an angel. You are not worthy of her, and, God knows, neither am I. Ah! here is her letter. I will read it.'

It was only a blank sheet of paper; but the dimmed eyes and dimmer mind saw nothing of that, and kindly memory supplied the gracious words.

'Darling, I am dying, so I may call you darling. You loved me once, and if you do not love me now it is not you who do not love me. Trouble has hurt you, Jona-

than; you are sad and weary. Your ambition has not come to you. But yet remember—for I long for your love only less than I long for your welfare—what once was your ambition. May it not be that you have fallen because you were created too great to succeed unless truly greatly? There are many years before you yet, most likely. Still there is time. You are in the position which once you longed to fill. Act up to it. Strive manfully, and in a better world, with no cloud between us—'

The paper drops from the worn fingers. There are tears in the terrible eyes.

'Act up to it—act up to it—act up to what? Let me see—I have forgotten!'

Oh! misery, that was only true. He had forgotten! Then he stamps his heel on the blank page, and cries out, passionately,

'Why do you remind me always of.

something I know not what? Would you triumph because I have failed? Failed: has he failed? Mrs. Stratford, I am very sorry. We must get him out of this scrape somehow. Believe me, it is only a scrape. There—you must not cry. Starvation. Oh! dear, no. A mere matter of detail to release him and start him afresh. Why should she blame me? What was there to tell? The fellow has his own greed to reckon with. Kind to me? Yes, for his own sake. They are all alike. Bah! it is a lie. I did it. I ruined him. We are all alike. Ha! ha!

The harsh laugh wakens a new train of thought, and the gloomy brow brightens.

'Let Lauriel be happy for to-night. Yes, mother, hush, she is coming—I see. You are to be a washerwoman, and I am to live on your earnings. Unselfish little darling. No! no! no! Far rather Lauriel. I would fail for ever——'

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

Deal gently, reader, with the memory of my hero. Consider with his fall his temptations and his trials. Doubt not but that Stella's prophecy, though not fulfilled in time, will be so throughout eternity. To fall may have been for one so strong and yet so weak, so grand and yet so petty, the best probation. And it may be that in the mysterious ways of Providence, with ambition purified to recognise the one glory worthy of promotion, and with chastened self-confidence which knows all power is a gift, and ascribes the merit to Him who gave it, he is now and for ever working out the heavenly destiny of doing eternal good.

THE END.

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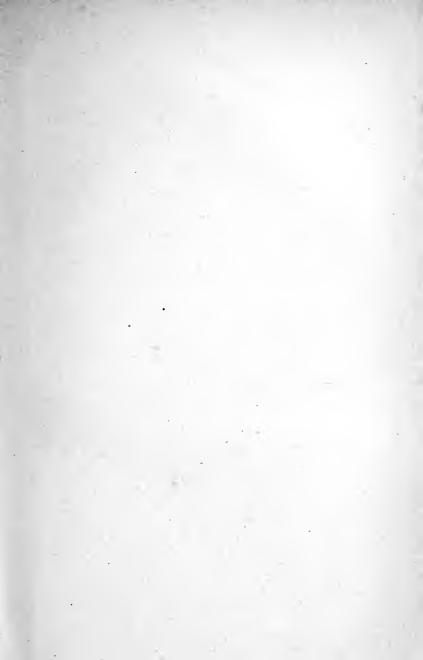
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